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# NATIONAL EDUCATION.

# NATIONAL EDUCATION.

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BY

Manning, HENRY EDWARD,
CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

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# NOTICE.

THE articles and papers contained in this volume were written from time to time during the last five years. They describe fairly, I hope, the unequal and inadequate state of our legal provisions for National Education.

My purpose has been to show that the only adequate remedy for our present piecemeal system is to be found in a higher, larger, and equal law, which shall give ample and efficient education to all our children of school age, and shall firmly guard both the liberty of conscience and the vital heirloom of Christianity.

#13,684
42,553
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# FIFTY REASONS

## WHY THE VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND OUGHT TO SHARE THE SCHOOL RATES.

# FIFTY REASONS

WHY THE

## VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND

OUGHT TO

## SHARE THE SCHOOL RATES.

1. Because all who pay Rates ought to share in the benefit of the Rates.

2. Because to compel payment and to exclude from participation is political injustice.

3. Because to offer participation upon conditions known beforehand to be of impossible acceptance is wilful and deliberate exclusion.

4. Because to offer education either without Christianity or with indefinite Christianity to the people of England—of whom the great majority are definitely and conscientiously Christian—is a condition known beforehand to be of impossible acceptance. Such offer is therefore politically and morally unjust.

5. Because to confer the exclusive control and enjoyment of the Education Rate on the Board Schools *alone is* to create a grievance of conscience like

that of the old Church Rates. The Nonconformists were compelled to pay for the maintenance of a religious body to which they were conscientiously opposed. The great majority of the people of England, who conscientiously refuse both education without Christianity and schools of indefinite Christianity, are now compelled to pay Rates for the support of such schools.

6. Because it is at variance with fact to say that the Act of 1870 was founded upon the exclusion of Voluntary Schools from the Rates. It gave, indeed, the Rates to the Board Schools. It did not give them to the Voluntary Schools. But it nowhere affirmed that Voluntary Schools could not or ought not to share in the Rates. On this it was silent. The Rates are public money, like the Parliamentary Grants. The Voluntary Schools are not excluded from the public revenues: whether from the Treasury or from the Rates, matters not. In principle, it is all one.

7. Because the public money, whether by Grant or Rate, is exclusively given for the Secular instruction in Elementary Schools.

8. Because it is contrary to reason and to fact to say that the public money is given for Religious teaching, or used for Religious teaching. The *utmost* received by a Voluntary School is only *one-half of its* maintenance. In the great

majority of cases it is less. This is not enough to pay even for the Secular teaching alone. The Government buys the Secular elementary teaching at a greatly reduced price, and, as compared with Board Schools, at an almost nominal price.

9. Because the 14,000 Voluntary Schools save the public revenue at least 700,000*l.* a year.

10. Because, if they were extinguished, it would cost the country at least 30,000,000*l.* to buy sites, and build the schools necessary to replace them; and an annual increase of Rate amounting to no less than 2,000,000*l.* for maintenance. This is calculated upon the present number of children in attendance. But if we add the million of children to be brought into average attendance, these amounts must be proportionately increased.

11. Because they are the only safeguard of the rights and conscience both of parents and children.

12. Because they embody the freedom of the people to educate themselves in opposition to the Pagan and Revolutionary claim that the educator of the people is the State.

13. Because the Christian people of England never have given up, never can give up, this natural and Christian liberty of conscience. The Act of 1870 did not spring from their will, nor does it represent their mind.

*14. Because,* until Christianity, full and definite

made England to be one and Christian, there was no England. The only England known to history and to the world is Christian England, which has been perpetuated by the Christian conscience of the people until the schools of 1870 departed from the education of our forefathers.

15. Because so little does the Board School system represent the mind or will of the people, that not more than a fourth entitled to vote take the trouble to vote at the elections of the School Boards.

16. Because the Christian Schools at this time are 14,000, and the Board Schools, after seventeen years, with the borrowing of 17,000,000*l.* and the annual expenditure of 3,000,000*l.*, are only 4000; and the children attending the Christian Schools are 2,000,000, and those attending Board Schools are 1,000,000.

17. Because the School Rate is denied to the great majority of the English people, and given only to a minority. This is truly Sectarian legislation.

18. Because the School Boards are without precedent or parallel in English law. First, a School Board is a Corporation in perpetual flux. Secondly, it is a Trust with enormous command of public money. But the Trustees come and go every *three years,* and no one is personally liable for *laches, waste,* or maladministration. Moreover,

there is practically no audit till the money is spent, and the mismanagement beyond remedy.

19. Because the administration of the Board Schools, under the encouragement of the Department, has exceeded the limits of Elementary education, confounded the distinction of Primary and Secondary Schools, and provided higher education for those who are able to pay for the better education of their children out of the Rates which are paid by the poor.

20. Because there is practically no limit to the expenditure of the Boards. The Christian Schools are checked by poverty. The Board Schools are never, and can never be, poor. They alone have the Rates, and the Rates are inexhaustible.

21. Because the Christian Schools, which were the only schools of the people down to 1870, maintained then and now by the self-denial and zeal of the people, receive of Government only what they can earn by their efficiency from the Parliamentary Grant alone. The Board Schools likewise receive what they can earn from the Treasury on equal conditions, and they hold and enjoy also the School Rate, from which the Christian Schools are absolutely excluded. Until this inequality is morally and legally redressed, the administration of the Act of 1870 is unequal, and therefore unjust.

22. *Because* the efficiency of the Christian Schools

tested by the fierce competition of the last seventeen years, shows that they are equal to the Board Schools within one or two per cent, or even within a few decimal points. The richest schools are only on a parity with the poorest.

23. Because no reason can be assigned for excluding the Christian Schools from the School Rate which would not equally exclude the Board Schools. If the reading of the Bible in Board Schools is not paid for by Rate, so neither is the teaching of the Creed in Christian Schools. Of two things, one: either religion is paid for by public money in both or in neither. Moreover, Board Schools have no money but public money. Christian Schools buy sites, build schools, maintain teachers, out of private contributions, and sell good and efficient Secular education to Government for half-price.

24. Because no reason can be found for excluding Christian Schools from the Rates but that they are Christian. If this be true, the Board Schools, by their own confession, are not Christian. But they claim to be religious: but if not Christian, of what religion? The religion of the Bible in any sense but its own: with explanation chronological, etymological, ethnographical, but not Christian, and by anybody except Clergyman, Minister, Priest, Rabbi, or anybody duly *trained and taught* to know the meaning of the *Bible.*

25. Because this means either that the Bible has no sense of its own, or no sense ascertainable by us: or, again, that Christian children must be robbed of Christian education because Churchmen and Dissenters cannot agree as to what Christianity is.

26. Because as yet the Legislature of this country has never pronounced that the religion of Board Schools is the maximum of ascertainable Christianity. On the contrary, it has refrained from even discussing questions of religious controversy. It excludes them all, and confines itself to the Secular education of the people, leaving to them full liberty of faith and conscience.

27. Because, for that reason, the Act of 1870 is not the last word on National Education, much less is it a "settlement" or a final Education Law. It was, and is, no more than one more partial and fragmentary enactment in our piecemeal treatment of the education of the people; a provision hastily made to meet an immense need without delay. What the Voluntary system had not done it supplied. The Nonconformists refused the Denominational Schools, and had not provided schools of their own. The Act of 1870 was passed in their behalf. But the Legislature had no intention of arming a minority with *power to* destroy the schools of the majority of *the English* people. But such is the avowed

policy and intention of the Birmingham School and its adherents.

28. Because the inequalities and injustice of this dual system, and the damage and retarding of education by friction and collision, have become so evident that some higher and more comprehensive Education Law is absolutely necessary.

29. Because the late Royal Commission, though it refrained from framing any such scheme of larger administration, nevertheless, in its 181st Recommendation, affirmed that the time is come for such higher and larger legislation. Its words are :

> "That the time is come when, for the best interests of Education, some more comprehensive system of administration should be found : first, to remove as far as possible the grave and inequitable inequalities of the two systems of Voluntary and Board Schools, as now existing ; and secondly, to eliminate as far as possible, for the future, the friction and collision which have so often and so injuriously arisen between them."

30. Because the Commission, by the Report of its majority, fully recognised the dangerous inequalities under which the Voluntary Schools suffer, and recommended the extension of the local Education Rate to the maintenance of all Elementary Schools.

31. Because the unwillingness to accept of Rate-aid *manifested by* the Conference at the National *Society by a division* of sixty-five as against

forty-five was founded upon a fear of interference with the independent management of Voluntary Schools. Where public money is received there must be public audit, inspection, and a share in management. This is already exercised by the Department of the Committee of Privy Council in virtue of Government Grants. Some such defined or proportionate share of management, under similar conditions, by local authorities, would in no way diminish the independence of Voluntary Schools in matters of religion and morals.

32. Because at this moment the denominational Reformatory and Industrial Schools are visited and inspected by the Government Departments with perfect peace and acquiescence on the part of the Voluntary Managers. These schools are already transferred to the Counties.

33. Because when the County Councils are formed and are in activity, and the Report of the Commission, which as yet few have studied, shall be better understood, the Managers of Voluntary Schools will see that not only justice, but their own safety, will depend upon some further legislation which shall be equal, uniform, and common to all.

34. Because the objections of the friends of the present Board School administration spring openly and *visibly from* a desire to retain the exclusive enjoy*ment* and control of the Rates, with all the

inequalities and unjust advantages derived from inexhaustible public resources without personal self-denial, as against schools supported by self-denial for conscience' sake.

35. Because they avow their hope that the Board School system will be universal, to the displacement and extinction of the Voluntary system.

36. Because this would make the State the educator of the people; the disastrous effects of which are already seen in France and in the United States.

37. Because State Education is the worst form of Education, fatal to the independence of national conscience, energy, and character.

38. Because this would complete what the Act of 1870 began—namely: (1) a breach in the tradition of Christian England; (2) a transfer of parental rights and responsibilities to the State in all its political fluctuations; (3) a new departure in national life and national character deliberately not Christian.

39. Because the attempt to carry out such a system of education in Catholic Ireland, Presbyterian Scotland, and Christian England would rekindle the most perilous religious conflicts, and would certainly end in failure.

*Because the whole* power of Government since the *sixteenth century* has always been defeated in its

conflicts with the religious denominations of the three kingdoms.

41. Because neither will the Denominational system ever win back the whole population of England and Wales, nor will the Board School system ever extinguish the Christian Schools of this country; but a higher, larger, and equal law, giving place and liberty of action to both the Voluntary and Board School systems, will reconcile their variances, and peacefully mature and complete a National system of education worthy of the name.

42. Because the three Secretaries of the Committee of Privy Council—Lord Lingen, down to 1869; Sir Francis Sandford, down to 1884; Mr. Patrick Cumin, now Secretary—all alike recommend a larger administration, combining the two systems and placing all Elementary Schools upon the Rates.

43. Because the Report of the Royal Commission of 1861 recommended that all Elementary Schools should share in the County Rates.

44. Because the County Government Act contemplates the transfer of education, both as to finances and as to administration, to the County Councils.

45. Because local administration is surest, and develops local responsibility and energy: which are suspended and destroyed by centralisation.

*46. Because a large* decentralisation of the functions of

the Education Department is certain, inevitable, and most expedient.

47. Because what touches so closely the conscience and homes of the people ought to be within their knowledge and reach.

48. Because the education of children is a local duty, and confers a local benefit. It ought, therefore, to be cared for, and in part paid for, by each locality.

49. Because the supreme control will always rest in the centre, the Education Department; by visitation, inspection, and quasi-legislation, by Codes and Minutes; securing thereby unity and just administration in localities.

50. Because the County Government Act and the tide of modern legislation have made this decentralisation and localisation inevitable. It will be carried out "with us, or without us, or against us." The last is swift ruin; the second, slow defeat and extinction; the first will enable us to meet openly and fairly both the Counties and the Parliament, so as to insure our participation in the equal and universal aid given to Elementary Schools from both local and Imperial resources.

# IS THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1870 A JUST LAW?

BY

CARDINAL MANNING.

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NEW YORK.

# IS THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1870 A JUST LAW?

To propose the repeal of the Education Act of 1870 would be like proposing the repeal of the Gregorian Calendar. We cannot go back twelve days behind the rest of the world.

The Act of 1870 was necessary. The population had outgrown all existing means of education. The children uneducated counted by hundreds of thousands, perhaps by millions. The standard of education was on a low level. England was behind both Germany and France in the diffusion of intellectual culture, at least among the lower and middle classes of the people.

The principles embodied in the Act of 1870 cannot be rescinded; they ought rather to be carried out to their full and complete application.

The principles and intentions may be stated as follows:—

1. That education, whether by voluntary schools or by rate schools, shall be universal, and co-extensive with the needs of the whole population.

2. That an education rate shall be levied in all places where the existing schools are not sufficient for the population in number or in efficiency, and that such *rate shall be* administered by a board elected by the *ratepayers.*

3. That the standard of education shall be raised to meet the needs and gradations of the people.

4. That all schools receiving aid, whether by Government grant or by rate, shall be brought under the provisions of the statute law.

5. That all such schools shall be under inspection of Government, and bound by all minutes and codes of the Committee of Privy Council as sanctioned by Parliament.

6. Lastly, it has been since that date enacted that education shall, under certain conditions and for certain classes, be compulsory.

Now, these principles have been so long admitted, and have worked themselves so deeply into public opinion and daily practice, that no scheme or proposition at variance with them would be listened to.

The condition thus made for us being irreversible, our duty is to work upon it and to work onward from it for the future.

Assuming then that the principles of the Act of 1870 are good and their results beneficial, the promoters of that Act cannot but desire that it should be carried out to its fullest extent. If this be so, then, in the first place, let the education rate be levied upon the whole population.

Putting away all ecclesiastical questions, it cannot be denied that the State is justified in providing for the education of its people. It has a right to protect itself from the dangers arising from ignorance and *which breed crime* and turbulence. It has a duty *to protect children* from the neglect and sin of

parents, and to guard their rights to receive an education which shall fit them for human society and for civil life.

If the civil power has these rights and duties towards the people, it has the corresponding rights and powers to levy upon the people such taxes or rates as are necessary for the due and full discharge of such duties.

But correlative to these rights of the civil power are also the rights of the people. If the Government may tax the whole people for education, the whole people have a right to share in the beneficial use of such taxation. An education rate raised from the whole people ought to be returned to the whole people in a form or in forms of education of which all may partake. If any one form of education can be found in which all the people are content to share, let it be adopted; if no one such form be possible, let there be as many varieties of form as can with reason be admitted. No one form of religious education would satisfy Catholics, Anglicans, Nonconformists, and unbelievers. No form whatsoever of merely secular instruction will satisfy the great majority who believe that education without religion is impossible. Therefore, if no one form can be found to satisfy all, many and various forms of education ought to be equally admitted, and equally allowed to stand on the same ground before the law. This does not mean that every individual or every caprice may claim a share in the *education rate*; but that every association or body of *men having* public and distinct existence, already

recognised by law, should be recognised also as a unit for the purposes of education, and, being so recognised, therefore admitted to a participation in the education rate; reserving always to the Government its full inspection, and to the ratepayers their due control and audit of accounts. But of this in detail hereafter.

Having thus cleared the ground, and made it impossible that any one should say with truth that they who oppose the way in which the Act of 1870 has been hitherto carried out oppose the Act itself, or that they are friends of darkness, or that they would hinder the education of the people, or that they ask for public money to spread their own religious belief, we may go on to see in what the present way of carrying out the Act is open to the censure of inequality and injustice.

1. First of all, the exclusive enjoyment and control of the education rate is given to one only class of schools, which represent one and only one form of opinion, and that form which is repugnant to the majority of the people of the United Kingdom—namely, that such schools should be only secular, to the exclusion of religion. The exclusion of religion excludes the vast majority of the people from those schools; and such schools, being exclusive, are truly and emphatically sectarian. And here, lest I should seem not to know, or, knowing, to omit to say, that the Bible is read now in the majority of Board Schools, I

*the fact to prove* that religion is not taught in

*All doctrinal* formularies and catechisms are

*sly excluded* by the Act of 1870. But religion

without doctrine is like mathematics without axioms, or triangles without base or sides. I heartily rejoice that the life, and words, and works, and death of the Divine Saviour of the world should be read by children. But that is not the teaching of religion, unless the true meaning and the due intrinsic worth of all these things be taught. But this would perforce be doctrinal Christianity, prohibited by law. There can be no mathematics without precise intellectual conceptions and adequate verbal expression. The undergraduate who went into the schools with a general notion of his Euclid was plucked.

2. But, secondly, the school rate presses unequally on the rich and on the poor. On the poor it is a sensible burden, on the rich it is absolutely insensible. For so great a sensible burden the poor ought to receive a sensible benefit.

3. Thirdly, the Board Schools were avowedly intended to receive the children of the poor. But the character of the Board Schools has been gradually so raised that the poor children are thrown upon the voluntary schools; and the Board Schools are largely frequented by the children of the middle class. The poor, therefore, so far, are paying for schools in which their own children are not taught, and the tradesman's children are educated on the rate paid also by the poor. The London School Board has now proposed to found schools of a higher standard. I heartily go with the desire to provide such schools, but it is removing them *still further* from the poor and still further into the *middle class*.

4. Fourthly, the amount of money spent by the School Boards out of the rate, and by loans upon the rate, amounts in ten years to about 13,000,000*l.* There has been no doubt profuse and needless expenditure, for gold may be bought too dear, and money may be wasted even in education, but nevertheless education is, if not the highest, at least inseparable from the highest interests and duties of a commonwealth. Education is vital to the commonweal. No amount of money really needed for the education of the millions that cannot pay for their own education ought to be thought too much, if only it be expended with due care and prudence, and if all who pay share equally in the benefit. But this is not so at the present time. It is of this inequality that we complain, and this inequality is a grave injustice.

5. Fifthly, the injustice will be seen to be still graver and more glaring, if we compare the manner in which voluntary schools and Board Schools have been dealt with since the Act of 1870 became the law of the land.

There are at this time two sources from which public money flows into the work of education. The first is the Consolidated Fund out of which since the year 1838 the Committee of Privy Council has made grants to voluntary schools. The second is the school rate created by the Act of 1870.

Now, in the grants from the Consolidated Fund *both* voluntary schools and Board Schools share equally. *The two classes of schools* can earn according to the *same minutes and codes* fixed by the Committee of

Privy Council. Thus far the voluntary schools and the Board Schools are on equal terms; so far they stand on the same level before the law. But here ends equality, and here an inequality, which nothing can justify, begins. The voluntary schools are absolutely and altogether excluded from the school rate. The founders and managers of such schools must buy sites, erect buildings, pay teachers, bear all costs of management out of their own self-denial.

The Board Schools have exclusive enjoyment and control of the school rate. With the public money they buy sites, erect buildings, pay teachers, and all costs of management, without contributing a sixpence by free gift or self-denial. On what principle can this be justified?

The voluntary self-denial of those who founded and maintained schools before 1870 had expended millions of money of which there is no accurate record. They were, till 1870, the sole educators of the people. Parliament was lagging behind. It voted a paltry 600,000*l.* a year for education. Every year 1,200,000*l.* at least was contributed by voluntary self-denial. The voluntary schools in 1870 were about 8000 in number, and were educating 1,700,000 children. Nevertheless, there were perhaps a million of children, as we were told, without education. Who was to blame? First, every successive Government and Parliament which had neglected this great obligation and overlooked this crying need. Who next was to blame? All those who, by apathy and want of *generous* self-denial, had never taxed themselves, or

opened heart or hand, for the education of the people. They, *colle mani alla cintola*, looked on while others laboured. Who alone were not to blame? The founders and managers of voluntary schools, who in those dreary and starving days greatly denied themselves, and founded all that England had of primary education. And what has the Act of 1870 done?

It has done nothing for those who by their self-denial had created the national education of England.

And it has done everything for those who had never done anything for the country or for themselves.

It has endowed with the school rate those who had done nothing, and it has excluded those who had hitherto educated the people of England from participation in the school rate, to which they are also nevertheless compelled to pay.

Let nobody deceive himself by saying that they are not excluded: that the education of the Board Schools is open to them, and the refusal is their own. We have not forgotten the fox and the crane. The School Board has the cunning of both. It spreads an abundant feast, but in platters and bottles where we cannot touch it. The offer of the Board Schools to the people of England is: "We will teach your children if you will give up religious education." Christian parents answer: "You can force us to pay your rate, but you shall not rob our children of their religion." The education formed under the Act of 1870 falls entirely into the hands of those who *desire* to exclude religion from the education of the *English people. In time* past half the population was *untaught, because the* secularists had not zeal and self-

denial enough to found voluntary secular schools; and now they have been rewarded by an Act which endows schools without religion at the joint, if not the chief, cost of those who, by energy and generous self-denial, have created the national and Christian education of England mainly at their own cost.

6. It would be difficult to find in all our recent history a more unequal and unjust condition. I am aware that the framers of the Act of 1870 did not intend to bring about this great inequality. The refusal to allow voluntary schools to share in the school rate was a subsequent exclusion. It might have been foreseen as certain to come, and it has now rooted itself for these ten years.

Who can doubt that in the long run the system which rests on the inexhaustible school rate will spread more and more, and the system which rests on the self-denial of men of various conditions and classes, with all their vicissitudes of life and fortunes, will grow less and less: that is, that the "supplement," as it is called, will become the system, and the system will sink into the secondary rank of a supplement; or, in other words, that schools without religion will be the national schools of Christian England, and the remnant of Christian schools will be a tolerated survival of the tradition of English Christianity?

7. Already this inverted process has begun to work. Many schools have been handed over to the School Boards by Nonconformists, and some also by clergy of the *Established* Church. To hand them over saves *money, trouble,* and anxiety. Nothing but zeal for

education or for religion will stand out against this temptation. Ill examples are quickly followed. Ill examples are on the inclined plane. To go down is easy and alluring. Good examples of effort, self-denial, and generosity tax the will, the spirit, and the perseverance of men. Some, we may hope, will keep up to the effort; many will give way. In ten years the compact strength of to-day will be broken, and the earnest resolution of the last ten years will be relaxed.

8. A further and more dangerous inequality is this. The School Boards have power to place a Board School in any locality in which, according to their judgment, subject only to the Committee of Privy Council, sufficient means of education do not already exist. The Board School once opened, no new voluntary school can be formed. Take an illustration of this inequality. In a given place where a Board School exists, a sudden influx of people, as in the manufacturing or mining districts often happens, comes in. They may be either Church of England people, or Catholics, or religious Wesleyans. Their existing schools upon the spot are not large enough, or as yet they may have none. By the present practice the permission to found their own schools might be refused to them; and by the compulsory powers of the School Board their children might be forced into the Board Schools. In this way the "supplement" has the power of continual expansion, thereby preoccupying the face of the country and blocking out all voluntary schools. Moreover, it appears *that sites for Board Schools* are being bought up in *districts which as yet* are not built over. When they

are inhabited, the Board School will be in possession against all comers.

9. When it is borne in mind that the Board Schools are without religion, and that the voluntary schools are the Christian schools of Christian England, we shall have some idea of the change which has already begun stealthily to work among us. Who can doubt of its inevitable ascendency in virtue of exclusive privileges and an inexhaustible command of the public money?

In order to measure this danger let the following statistics be well weighed. The voluntary schools from 1838 to 1870 had provided school room for about 1,800,000 children. Between 1870 and 1880 they had added 1,800,000 more, making in all about 3,600,000. The School Board in the ten years since 1870 have expended nearly 13,000,000*l.*, and have provided school room for 1,000,000 children. The resources of the voluntary schools are limited. Government does not grant a shilling for new sites or new buildings. The Board Schools have the inexhaustible school rate to draw from year after year for these purposes.

If every ten years shows an expenditure of so many millions, what is to check the universality of Board Schools? The voluntary system rests on free will alone: the School Boards are armed with compulsory taxation and compulsory education.

I may be asked then, What would you propose? I will answer in two sentences:—

1. Let a school rate or tax be levied over the whole *population* as a part of the general taxation of the *country*.

2. Let all schools, with or without religious teaching, partake in the school rate, as they partake now of the grants of the Consolidated Fund, under all the conditions of the statute law and of the minutes and codes of the Committee of Privy Council.

These two propositions change nothing in the Act of 1870; for extension is not change, but rather completion and fulfilment.

To this proposal the following objections have been made:—

1. That it would be granting public money for religious teaching. This is plainly and patently contrary to fact. The Government has reduced voluntary schools to the condition of secular schools. No religion can be taught in the school hours; no religious books can be used. In what, then, do they differ from Board Schools? The Board Schools teach no religion, and draw from both sources of public aid. Let the voluntary schools in like manner draw equally from both for the secular instruction only. The Government grants no money for our religious teaching; it does not pay a sixpence for it. The Government buys of us our secular instruction at half-price. It buys the same of the Board Schools at double the price. Schools, on an average, earn one-third, or say one-half, of their cost. Will anybody venture to say that the religious teaching of our schools costs the other half? For instance, a school costing 300*l.* a year, we will say, earns 100*l.* Do the other 200*l.* go *for religious teaching? The religious teaching costs nothing. It is freely* given by our clergy, or by our

teachers out of the school-time. The maintenance of our schools would cost precisely as much if no religion were taught in them. The teacher's salary could not be less if he taught no religion. Therefore at this time the voluntary schools have three burdens on them: (1) they support themselves; (2) they have to pay school rate; (3) they have to sell their teaching to the Government at half-price. All this is so obviously and glaringly unjust that it seems as if the exclusion of the voluntary schools from the school rate were simply *in odium Christi*. It is contrary to fact and truth to say that the public money would go to the teaching of religion. If the schools were as purely and exclusively secular as the Board Schools, they would cost to a fraction as much as they do at this moment. If their whole cost were paid out of the school rate, not a fraction would go to the religious teaching. But the founders and managers and teachers believe and maintain that the education of a Christian people must be Christian; and for this heterodoxy they are mulcted by exclusion from the school rate.

2. But, again, it will be said: The voluntary schools choose their own teachers. And perhaps the Board Schools do not choose their own teachers? Surely this is a wanton objection. Is it an honest one? If the secular teaching of voluntary schools be equal to the secular teaching of Board Schools, and from the Government Reports we know that within decimal points it is so, why should not the selection of *the teacher* be with the founders and managers of the *voluntary* schools? The Government avowedly look

only to the secular teaching, and treats our schools as secular schools. The objectors parade their schools as exclusively secular; so far as the law takes cognisance, our schools are equally secular. Moreover, we show equal efficiency in secular teaching, and yet the Government gives to the Board Schools, out of grants and rates, not double only, but an enormous excess over the pittance we earn by equal efficiency. This is really mulcting the voluntary schools, because with equal secular efficiency they also, at other times, and by others means, teach Christianity. In what does the selection of the teacher affect the claim of the school to fair and equal treatment, if its secular results are what they ought to be?

I have said that the efficiency of the voluntary and the Board Schools is equal. From the last Government Report I find the proportion of passes in the voluntary and the Board Schools as follows:—

| | Voluntary | Board |
|---|---|---|
| Reading . . . | 88·86 | 89·31 |
| Writing . . . | 79·79 | 83·16 |
| Arithmetic . . . | 74·17 | 79·33 |

And this is the competition of schools starved by exclusion from the school rate against schools surfeited with public money. The average stipend of teachers in the voluntary schools would not be 150*l.*; in the Board Schools it is not less than 250*l.* a year.

3. But further, it has been said: If a share in the *rate be given*, the ratepayers must have control. Why *not? At this time* Government gives aid, and has *control over the whole* secular teaching of our schools.

It has control also over the financial, material, and sanitary management of the school by a vigilant and close inspection. The school rate, in like manner, would go only for secular teaching. Let the ratepayers share with Government in the inspection of these things. At this time the industrial and reformatory schools founded by voluntary effort, and aided by grants and by rates, are visited by the Government inspectors and by those of the School Boards. At this time the diocesan schools, founded and supported by voluntary efforts, in which are children transferred from the district schools of the Poor Law, are visited closely and vigilantly, not only by the inspectors of the Local Government Board, but by all the boards of guardians in the metropolitan district. They pay out of the rates for the maintenance of their children, and they come at all times with or without notice, and investigate everything, writing their commendation, or blame, or requirements in a book. If voluntary schools were aided out of rates, the due application of such rates would be, in like manner, open to the inspection of the ratepayers.

4. Lastly, it is said that this would be concurrent endowment. I answer, if it be endowment, then the Board Schools are already endowed; and if they be endowed, then a glaring injustice has been done. The State has endowed the education of those who had done nothing to educate the people of this country; and it has endowed exclusively a kind of school which the *majority of the* people cannot enter. If it be endowment, then the ill example has been set by those who

cry out against endowments and would disendow the Established Church. They would disendow its schools while they are endowing their own. I do not deny that there is some look of truth in this talk of endowment. But I have shown, that as the enjoyment of grants and rates is exclusively for secular instruction in Board Schools, so it would be strictly and exclusively in the Voluntary Schools, no religious teaching being paid for, or even estimated in the costs of such schools. In answering these objections, I have not been able to clear my mind of the thought that those who make them are impelled rather by unwillingness to admit others to the rate, than by the force of reason. Is it that they fear that the energy, and zeal, and self-denial of the voluntaries, if it only had fair play and equal aid from the public revenues in grants and rates, would outstrip the Board Schools in multiplication and efficiency? I am firmly persuaded that this would be the case. And I must affirm that the voluntary system is a moral power which no public money could create. It is zeal against hire. It is the unbought energy of those who gladly spend, and are spent, for the common weal. It is free service and free gift against paid service and public money. This noble and national force of beneficence Governments can paralyse, and starve, and destroy; but they cannot create or rekindle if they should insanely destroy it.

A great American has said that the Americans *are "the most* common-schooled, but the least truly *educated of people."* May it never be said that the *English are the most* "board-schooled of people;"

for certainly we should then be the most heartlessly educated and the least Christian of people.

I will now very briefly enumerate the reasons why I believe such an extension of the Act of 1870 ought to be made.

1. First, because the people of this country, so far as they have yet been able, have pronounced decisively against merely secular instruction. In all School Boards, with the exception of a few, it has been resolved that the Bible shall be read and explained in their schools. This covers about 12,000,000 of the population, and the schools in that area have 800,000 children. Add to this the whole mass of the voluntary schools—Anglican, Catholic, Wesleyan—by which religion and doctrinal Christianity are sedulously taught, containing at least 2,000,000 children, and it may be said that the whole people of the country have declared themselves for religious schools.

2. I say so far as they have as yet been able to speak; for the Parliament of 1870 was not elected on an Education cry, but on a cry for the disestablishment of the Irish Church. The Liberation Society and its political allies went in with enthusiasm against the first wing of the Tudor House, which then was tottering, in the hope of shaking also the other wing in due time, and then ruining the body. It was, therefore, a Parliament ready for schemes of secular education. *Omne majus continet minus.* The disendowment of religion contains the endowment of secularism, as the greater *includes the* less. But for this political crisis it may *be doubted* whether the Bill of 1870, as it stands

would have ever become law. If at the next general election the constituencies were fairly asked, Will you have secular or Christian education? I believe, and, until the contrary is proved, I shall continue to believe, that a vast majority would declare for Christian schools.

For the reasons here too briefly and hastily given I must affirm, that the working of the Act of 1870 has resulted in grave injustice to those who had been labouring to create the great system of Christian and national schools, while the advocates of secular education were doing, and had done, nothing for the instruction of the people. It excludes them from the benefit of the school rate; it lays on them the double burden of paying to support a system of schools which they in conscience cannot frequent, and of maintaining schools of their own; it also results in a growing danger to the Christian education of England. Until 1870 the tradition of Christian education in England, however thwarted and obstructed, had never been broken. For the first time it was broken then. A generation is growing up, formed in secular schools, in which, if the brain is stimulated, the heart, the conscience, the will, and therefore the character, cannot be formed. England is a Christian people, and its national character is Christian, because it has hitherto been formed and perpetuated by Christian schools. How can this English and Christian character be perpetuated or formed when the schools have ceased to be Christian? *If any* one shall say it will still be formed in the homes *of the people, such* an answer is either from ignorance *of what the homes of* our millions really are, or from

a levity of mind. It is, then, the Christianity of England and the national character of Englishmen that are at stake. These things are too vital to be tampered with by politicians, and pedants, and parties. If, with the state of France before us, we will not look before, and either retrace our steps, or avert by timely wisdom the dangers we have created in these last years, then assuredly we shall incur, as we shall well deserve, the same political and social decline which has paralysed the character and dissolved the unity of that great people.

From the year 1838 to this day, the subject of education has been treated piecemeal, in the vicissitudes of political strife, by alternate Governments and by contending parties. It demands a wiser and a nobler treatment. The whole subject needs to be reviewed by an impartial tribunal, raised above the din and darkness of political conflicts.

The desire and will of the people at large ought to be known. I believe that at this time it is not adequately and truly known. There is widespread discontent in the homes of the people. We are told that the Board School system represents the mind of the people. We believe that it represents only a minority. The Board School system is instruction without religion. The whole people of Ireland would reject it. The great majority of Scotland would reject it. The great majority of the people of England are claimed by the Established Church. They would reject it. Of the Catholics of England and Scotland I need *not speak.* A multitude of Nonconformists, true to the *religious* spirit of their forefathers, would reject it.

Who would remain? An active minority which, in a moment of political excitement, carried the Act of 1870. We believe the great majority of the United Kingdom to desire religious and Christian schools. Why are they who say we are wrong in this belief so slow to let it be tested? I must believe that they are not so sure as they say. Let them, then, unite with us in putting it to the test. Let us unite in humbly praying that Her Majesty be graciously pleased to issue a Royal Commission to review the whole course of legislation in respect to education, with all the Acts of the Committee of Privy Council since 1838. The evidence to be taken would be that of men of every kind and class, whose life has been spent in acquiring personal experience and a mature judgment in the education of the people. They who desire that the Board School system should cover the face of the land will deprecate a Royal Commission. They who fear so great a disaster to our Christianity and character as Englishmen will earnestly pray for it. They will urge it all the more earnestly, because they believe that there is danger in delay; that every year will spread more widely schools without religion, and starve out the Christian schools of England. It is now or never. The ten years since 1870 have taught us our danger. The next ten years will render impossible what can be done now. In 1882 the Christian schools of England may be placed upon the broad and common foundation of equality before the law. In 1892, if we are slack to-day, the time may *be past for ever.*

# THE WORKING OF

# THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1870

## UNEQUAL: THEREFORE UNJUST.

BY

CARDINAL MANNING.

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# THE WORKING OF THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1870 UNEQUAL: THEREFORE UNJUST.

THE grave and courteous answer of Mr. Dale in the *Nineteenth Century* for January to what I had written on the Education Act of 1870 in December last, lays upon me the duty of making a reply. In doing so I hope that nothing will escape from me at variance with his good example.

My object is not contention but agreement: I desire to invite all who value Christianity and education in England to stand firmly together in defence of Christian education, and to press onward steadily for its extension throughout English homes. I rejoice, therefore, to note many points of agreement in Mr. Dale's reply to my argument.

1. We are fully agreed in the desire that the whole population of the country should be duly educated.

2. And that those who are unable, by reason of poverty, to provide education for their children should be aided by the help of the public revenues.

3. Further, and most emphatically, I agree with him, that to compel Nonconformists of any kind to go to an Anglican school, or to any school where their conscience can be tampered with, is a flagrant injustice.

4. Once more, that education is to be valued and *promoted for its* own sake, and not, as Mr. Dale puts

it, for the sake of "Churches." Though Catholics desire all men to come to the knowledge of the truth, their work of education has their own flocks and their own children so emphatically in view that the presence of non-Catholic children in their schools is wholly unsought, and, if their number be great, it is a cause of difficulty to them.

5. Further, I am rejoiced to perceive in the cautious reserve of Mr. Dale that he distinguishes between the reading of the Bible and doctrinal Christianity. He denies that they are equivalent in phrase or in fact. This I read with great satisfaction. I would that it were more widely recognised.

6. Lastly, I agree with Mr. Dale in all he says as to the care that is due to the Nonconformists scattered throughout the villages and small towns of the country. I would support with all my heart his pleading for them before any Royal Commission. He takes as an example the Parish of Blackford, with a thousand people, of which he claims half as Nonconformists. By his theory in page 62 he would have one only school for the sake of efficiency. I would have two, for the sake both of conscience and of Christianity. To impose one only Anglican school on the five hundred Nonconformists would be unjust. To impose a Board School on the five hundred Anglicans would be equally unjust. I would oppose both schemes as tyrannous; and I would contend for the Christian liberty and Christian conscience of both Nonconformists and *Anglicans. Thoroughly* as I value the efficiency of *chools, I value the* liberty and conscience of Christian

men far more. The Nonconformists of Blackford, being five hundred, could have their united school, and in five hundred there would be at least one hundred children: and a school of a hundred children, with proper care, may be made completely efficient. There are cases more difficult than that of Blackford. As you diminish the population so you increase the difficulty. But it is a still greater difficulty, not where there are thousands or hundreds, but where there are only tens. Such difficulties must always exist. Nobody knows them better than we. There are Catholics scattered in villages and in small towns by tens and by fives, or by single families here and there. We have too much common sense to demand of the majorities, be they Anglicans or Nonconformists, the breaking up not only of their schools but the sacrifice of their religious conscience, and the change of the legal status of their education to meet our objections. It would be like blowing up a town to clear the rooms of mosquitoes. There must always be residual difficulties which cannot be met by legislation. They must be treated by common sense, justice, and equity. The nearest approach to such a treatment would be what I have laid down: namely, a universal education rate, with proportionate participation, and separate schools for all who are willing to form them under the conditions of the statute: or, again, common schools on like terms for those who prefer them; or, finally, for all those who cannot form or maintain schools of their own, the amplest conscience clause, vigilantly guarded, and *promptly* vindicated.

But here begin our disagreements:—

1. I cannot think that the million of schoolless children in 1870 represented only poverty in their parents. First, because others equally poor had already founded and maintained their schools—witness the Wesleyans and the Catholics. These children were schoolless because, as I must believe, their parents looked on the education of the people as a matter belonging to the State, or at least not belonging to private persons, either as Christians or as members of the Commonwealth. Religion they held to be one thing and education another. They built their chapel and paid their minister, as Mr. Dale says. Having done this, they were content. This I believe to be the chief cause why, outside of the Voluntary schools, there was no education in the country. Other causes, indeed, there were, such as vice, neglect, intemperance—all these contributed to the general desolation; but the main cause, I must believe, was apathy, an absence of zeal for education, and of a sense of responsibility to found or to build schools for themselves and for others. This belief is still further confirmed by the fact that the Nonconformists of this country, always excepting the Wesleyans, are to be found chiefly among the middle and lower middle class. But the middle class are above poverty. The population of England and Wales in 1870 was about 22,000,000. The Established Church had provided school room for *1,765,944*, that is, taking a sixth for the children who *ought to be at school*, for about 10,000,000 people. *The Nonconformists* had at that time school room for

411,948, that is, by the same calculation, they had provided for about 2,500,000 people. It is clear, then, either that the Nonconformist population was greatly less than that of the Established Church, or that the Nonconformists were behindhand in the work of providing schools for their children. And this may be gathered from Mr. Dale's plea of poverty. They could not provide schools, he says. Therefore it is not unreasonable to believe that they did not; and from this it follows that they who were chiefly responsible for the destitution complained of have now received the chief benefit and control of the Act of 1870 and of the Education Rates.

2. I must also disagree in Mr. Dale's statement that the Board Schools represent the kind of religious teaching desired by the people of this country.

First, because the people of this country as yet know little of what the religious teaching of the Board Schools may be. "They are attached to the Board Schools," as Mr. Dale says, "because they are larger, handsomer, better lighted, better warmed, more attractive than their own schools." There is nothing of religion in all this. The people may be indifferent, or careless, or thoughtless about the religious teaching. But that is a long way from approving positively or knowingly of the religion taught in the Board Schools.

Further, if the people of this country had any zeal for the Act of 1870, or any care to promote its operation, they would go to the poll at the triennial elections. But the fact now comes out, that of the *electors a very* large proportion never vote at all. In

411,948, that is, by the same calculation, they had provided for about 2,500,000 people. It is clear, then, either that the Nonconformist population was greatly less than that of the Established Church, or that the Nonconformists were behindhand in the work of providing schools for their children. And this may be gathered from Mr. Dale's plea of poverty. They could not provide schools, he says. Therefore it is not unreasonable to believe that they did not; and from this it follows that they who were chiefly responsible for the destitution complained of have now received the chief benefit and control of the Act of 1870 and of the Education Rates.

2. I must also disagree in Mr. Dale's statement that the Board Schools represent the kind of religious teaching desired by the people of this country.

First, because the people of this country as a whole know little of what the religious teaching of the Board Schools may be. "They are attached to the Board Schools," as Mr. Dale says, "because they are better handsomer, better lighted, better [illegible] attractive than their own schools." [illegible] religion in all this. The people [illegible] careless, or thoughtless [illegible] or But that is a long [illegible] con- knowingly of the [illegible] ession. Further [illegible] les, as I [illegible] nformists do [illegible] ard Schools [illegible] national. [illegible] rmist [illegible] once [illegible]

the Metropolitan District, for instance, at the last election not one in four had zeal or care enough in the matter to go to the poll. There were weeks of placarding and addressing and canvassing in public meetings, and by private agents, but not one in four voted. In each of the Metropolitan boroughs about three-fourths, or even more, did not take the trouble to vote at all. This is a new revelation. Hitherto it has been thought and, because much vaunted, believed that the Act of 1870 was an Act demanded by the popular voice, and that it represents the popular mind. I agree with Mr. Dale in thinking that it was an Act carried by a Liberation Parliament, which began with the schools on its way to the Established Church.

It was so far a political measure. It disendowed religion in the schools as an approach to disendow religion in the Established Church. But, as I have said, the disendowment of religion is the endowment of secularism.

3. Here, again, is another point of disagreement. Mr. Dale thinks that I contradict myself because I have said that the Board Schools are secular schools, and also that the reading of the Bible in them has given them a religious character. These two things are perfectly consistent. There is no contradiction. At the outset the Bible was not read in them. The schools then were essentially secular. The desire of the people has forced the reading of the Bible into them, and now they have a religious semblance. This *fact proves that* whereas the schools are essentially *secular the people* have made them so far religious. I

quoted this fact, not to commend the Board Schools, but to prove that the desire of the people of this country is decisively in favour of religious education.

4. Once more, I fear, I must disagree where I most wish to agree with Mr. Dale. He affirms broadly that doctrinal Christianity may be taught, and is taught, in the Board Schools: and that not in contravention of the Act of 1870, but in conformity with it. He points out that the clause of the Act excludes only "Formularies and Catechisms distinctive of any denomination." If I rightly understand him, he says that this does not exclude the matter of such formularies, but only the formularies themselves. He says, indeed, that Christian doctrines may be taught, and are taught, by Nonconformists without creeds or formularies. If I had so interpreted the Act of 1870, I am afraid—"pace Sancti Ignatii"—that I should have been called a Jesuit. But if the Act of 1870 permits Nonconformist schoolmasters to teach in Board Schools the doctrines which Nonconformist ministers, without creeds or formularies, teach in chapels, what becomes of Clause 14? Are not these doctrines distinctive of any denominations? But they are taught without creeds or formularies. Yes, but doctrines are the mental conceptions of which creeds are only the verbal expression. Creeds are only the diagrams of the triangles, as I said. But Mr. Dale tells us that Nonconformists do not use creeds or formularies. Then Board Schools are after all Nonconformist and denominational. They are the endowment of the Nonconformist religion. I am *not arguing* to exclude the Nonconformist religion or

Christianity, so far as it is true, from the Board Schools. I thank God that so much of Christianity yet remains in the schools of the Act of 1870, and that the will of the people is forcing the Christianity of England, whatsoever it be, into the Board Schools and through the clauses of the Act of 1870. This is to me clear gain, but it enormously strengthens my argument as to the inequality and injustice of the Act in its present application. For it results in this. The Anglican, the Catholic, and the Wesleyan schools are aided by the Privy Council grants only, and that for maintenance alone, and not for the multiplication, of schools. The Nonconformist doctrines are aided by Privy Council grants, and are exclusively endowed with the whole Education rate, both for maintenance and for indefinite multiplication of Board Schools. Indeed, Mr. Dale says that the friends of the Act of 1870 foresaw and desired that Board Schools should "displace" all others. This is the issue at stake: honestly avowed.

And here I must call attention to the incongruities of this Biblical instruction. The Bible may be read and explained, and explained doctrinally, but only in such words as the schoolmaster may select. The weighed and exact words of formularies and catechisms, which the highest and best minds have for ages pondered and fixed as the most adequate and exact expression of truth, are not statutable, but the extemporaneous, or haphazard, words of the schoolmaster are *sanctioned by the Act* of 1870. Surely this is a surpassing *perversity*. Let us go a step further, the

schoolmaster may explain the Bible in the sense of doctrinal Christianity. But does the schoolmaster belong to no denomination? And does he so know the peculiarities of all denominations that he can teach a doctrinal Christianity which shall not coincide with any one of them? This unsectarian doctrinal Christianity should at once be stereotyped for the use of Board Schools. It is an achievement, or even a miracle, of Biblical exegesis. But if, to exclude errors, variations, and contradictions, it were stereotyped and imposed on all Board Schools, it would straightway become formulary. Mr. Dale says that the doctrines of our Lord's divinity, His atonement for the sins of man, the future judgment, may be taught without formularies in Board Schools. Are not these distinctive? But this is not all. If the people of England could be assured of the Biblical teaching of the schoolmasters in 1883, this would be no security for 1884. The schoolmasters, like other men, may change their minds. Lady Hewley's Charity is warning enough. The law has been changed to meet the lapse of endowments from Orthodoxy to Heterodoxy, from Trinitarianism to Unitarianism. A prescription of twenty years is enough, I believe, for any error in possession. Schoolmasters may begin to the satisfaction of Mr. Dale, but may end to the satisfaction of the Agnostics. Not only may schoolmasters change their minds, but schoolmasters may be changed themselves. They are here to-day and there to-morrow. And will the incoming doctrine agree with the outgoing? And the *poor children* of Christian parents, and the poor

parents of Christian children, are to be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine as schoolmasters and School Boards please. I do not know the English people if they will not one day rise up in anger against this trifling with all that is most precious to the poor, to their children, and to their conscience. Nine Conscience-clauses will not be enough to protect them from this creedless Christianity. The next work for the Liberation Society ought to be to disestablish and disendow the Board Schools.

There is, however, a still more preposterous result. With all their imperfections the ministers of religion are supposed to be qualified to teach by study, training, experience; and they teach with a sense of responsibility. They have been as much set apart to teach religion as schoolmasters are set apart to teach secular knowledge. But no minister is admitted to teach in a Board School. Of whatsoever colour he be, a minister is distinctive of a denomination. The schoolmaster is without colour or creed. No denomination owns him, nor he any. He is by the statute an unsectarian unattached. All trained ministers are excluded—only untrained schoolmasters may teach doctrinal Christianity by law. This exclusion of "the fittest," and the survival of the less fit, throws the religious teaching of our rising youth into the hands of the unfit. Could unreason more visibly betray itself? And can any considerate man wonder that all who hold dear as life the faith once delivered to the saints in all its integrity *and in all its precision* conscientiously refuse to send *their children to* Board Schools? And these schools

are one day to "isolate" and to "displace" the Voluntary and Christian schools of England. If Mr. Dale's account be accurate, the net result of all this would be that the Board School system has been turned into the endowment of a new religion. It is a Pan-Nonconformist Church concurrently endowed side by side with the Established Church.

I must also take leave to call this new form of Christianity emphatically sectarian; and the system itself, a new sect of which schoolmasters are the pontiffs. It is also a propaganda of Christianity without a creed. And the first effect of it will be to break down in the minds of the English people the surviving belief that Christianity is a fixed and definite truth. As yet, I do not believe that it represents the religion with which the people are content, but in ten years more I can well believe that they will not only be content with the dispensation of schoolmasters, but with less. The managers of the 302 Church schools, and the 176 Nonconformist schools, already surrendered to the School Boards, are content it seems with the shadow of their Christian inheritance.

5. Once more I must disagree on the statement that the Act of 1870 has done great things for the Voluntary schools. Mr. Dale says that by its committees, &c., it has enabled them "to increase the number of their schools, and the number of children in average attendance; that the grant earned has been greatly increased, and the number of the children nearly doubled." All this he sets down to the Act of 1870. *I set down* none of it. All might and ought to have

been done without it. If he had set it down to the movement that produced the Act itself, I should agree with him. The facts are these. The destitute condition of so large a number of children, the inadequacy of the efforts, great as they had been, of the founders of Voluntary schools, the niggardly parsimony of the annual vote for education of 600,000*l.* a year, with an irresistible impulse and a growing conviction throughout the country that we were behindhand in education —these and other like causes produced the Act of 1870. As soon as it became law, the Committee of Privy Council gave notice that after two years all grants in aid of building new schools would cease. This was, in fact, a declaration against the multiplication of Voluntary schools. And this at once roused the friends of religious education to a great effort. In the ten years from 1870 to 1880 the increase of schools and scholars was as follows:—

In 1869-70 there was school room for 1,765,944. In 1879-80, for 3,158,119; increase, 1,392,175. Average attendance in 1869-70, 1,062,999; in 1879-80, 1,981,684; increase, 918,685. Even Catholics out of their poverty raised a "Crisis Fund"—so called because of the perils of the Act of 1870—with this result: they raised 390,000*l.*, and provided school room for 71,518 additional children. There is no communion in England poorer than the Catholic Church. A few old and wealthy families there are, with a handful of the middle class and a million of labouring poor. What the *Catholics and Wesleyans* did, the Nonconformists might *have done, and more* abundantly.

Not a particle of this vast increase came directly from the Act of 1870. It did, indeed, give a menace and an alarm, followed by the refusal of building grants. All the machinery of committees and bye-laws, and boy-beadles, and school "visitors," might have been created without the Act of 1870 or the Board School system. Machinery is an accident which might have been created without the Act as it stands. All the 1,570,000*l.* which Mr. Dale says the Voluntary schools have earned has been earned since 1870, as before it, not by the Act or because of the Act, but under the minutes and inspection of the Committee of Privy Council. I must deny altogether that we owe to the Act of 1870 as such anything but alarm, and the energy which alarm excites. For this I thank it; but for nothing more. We owe to it much privation, the loss of the building grants, the legal secularisation of our schools, and the exclusion of Christianity from our school hours and from our school books. To the Nonconformist schools, and to those who had not denied themselves to provide schools, the Act was indeed a profuse and an exclusive boon. To those who had laboured and toiled, spending and being spent for the education of England, it was, as one of its chief promoters was compelled to confess in Parliament, great discouragement to Voluntary schools.

6. Again, I fear, I must accept Mr. Dale's disagreement by affirming once more that the Statute of 1870 has reduced our schools to the condition of secular schools. During the four hours of the school *day only* secular matter can be taught. What is taught

out of those hours is beyond the law, and, morally, as much out of the school as if it were taught under another roof. And as I said, it is taught *freely:* that is, so far as the Government is concerned, which pays nothing for it, and takes no cognisance of it—not freely, indeed, for the managers who bear the burden in the maintenance of the school, and in the teachers' stipend. Mr. Dale's comment, that if our schools are only secular, Government may dispense with them, is hardly well-weighed. Government is bound by every bond of equity and justice to recognise freedom of conscience; and if the Voluntary schools of England were "displaced," such a violation of conscience would be perpetrated as would convict all the agents, aiders, abettors, and comforters of such a policy of tyranny and simulation: of tyranny in violating conscience, of simulation in prating of religious liberty. Here is the inevitable alternative: the Legislature must either recognise liberty of conscience, and the schools freely founded on liberty of conscience; or, with the profession of civil and religious liberty in its mouth, it must force secular education upon a Christian people. Free denominational schools are the safeguards and depositories, the outworks and bulwarks, of liberty of conscience. The world has gone right round the compass. If the Free Churches of England should in the nineteenth century make reprisals on the Court of High Commission and the Star Chamber in the seventeenth century, they would take away the liberty of *conscience for which* their fathers suffered all pain and *loss, and make their* name a perpetual reproach. The

Voluntary or Christian schools give to the Government at an inadequate price a full secular teaching. This is all it requires, and all it recognises. To the Christian teaching of the school the Government contributes nothing, and has no pretext or plea to interfere. Nay more, it cannot interfere without a violation of the liberty of Englishmen to believe and to educate their children as their conscience dictates.

7. Again, I am unable to agree with Mr. Dale that in a population of 1500, howsoever divided in religion, there ought to be only one school, because small schools of sixty or seventy children are not efficient. Here we reach the truth. It is secular efficiency against religion and conscience. I would maintain that, whether the population be 15,000 or 1500, Anglicans, Catholics, and Nonconformists ought to be free to found their own schools, and ought to be aided by the public revenues to do so. If in such a population any desire and are willing to deny themselves to found a secular school, I would at once say that in our mixed state they ought to be helped by public aid to do so. As to efficiency, the Government by its inspectors will take care. In three places Mr. Dale says that Nonconformists are "unable," "are too poor," and "cannot" found schools for themselves. To this I answer again, the Wesleyans and Catholics of England out of their greater poverty have done so, and for the religious care of their children hold themselves bound to do so. Let others do the same. I cannot, therefore, accept the plea of inability, except in cases where the numbers are *few and scattered*. And these cases may be treated

exceptionally. The rule is founded on a great law of equal justice, and it ought not to be abandoned because of a few residual difficulties.

8. I am sorry to add to the list of disagreements, but two remain which I cannot pass over. Mr. Dale asks, What will become of the "moral power of the Voluntary system which no public money can create," "the unbought energy," "the free gift," if the Voluntary schools receive a share in the school rates? Voluntaryism would then cease to be. Not so fast; I will tell him. I would give to the Board Schools a share in the school rate in proportion to the voluntary contributions of those who desire to found such schools. This would at once spread the wholesome principle of voluntaryism all over the land. I would have no educational pauperism; and I would give to the Voluntary schools, in like manner, though not, perhaps, in like proportion, a share in the education rate. The effect of this measure would be universal equality, and therefore universal justice. The schools of the whole country would depend on four kinds of support: the Consolidated Fund, the school rate, the contributions of founders and managers, the school-pence paid by the parents. I have said that the proportion might vary. For denominational schools it may be equitable to require that the contributions should be larger and the school rate less than in the Board Schools. Mr. Dale says that most people would prefer schools managed by boards. Let them have them. But more, *I believe, would prefer* their own management and their *n schools. All who* pay ought to share; no school

ought to exist without voluntary contributions as well as State aid. Under the old Poor Law the people were pauperised, and the rates were intolerable, because all was done by the rate, and little was required of the receiver. The amendment of the Poor Law revived profitable labour and restricted relief to helpless poverty. This combination of popular energy with public aid runs through all the healthiest and most vigorous activities of our commonwealth. It is being destroyed by the working of the Act of 1870. Mr. Dale desires the displacement of "Voluntary schools by Board Schools." He says: "the Board School system is certain to supersede the schools of the denominationalists" (p. 70). Here again we agree. He thinks it will be for good. I believe it will be a fatal and final evil. Time was when some would have agreed with me. "Our object," said Mr. Forster in 1870, "is to complete the present Voluntary system, to fill up gaps, sparing the public money where it can be done without, procuring as much as we can the assistance of the parents, and welcoming as much as we rightly can the co-operation and aid of those benevolent men who desire to assist their neighbours."[1] Mr. Dale's system of universal Board Schools would abolish all Voluntary schools, and convert all voluntary contributions into school rates. Where would Voluntaryism be then? Education would be endowed as by tithes and Church rates levied upon the willing and unwilling alike. My desire would be to lighten the rates as much as possible, and to develop as much

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxcix. p. 443.

as possible the energy, generosity, zeal, self-respect, self-help of the people of England. Rate schools will kill all these highest qualities of a free people, and burden us with a mechanical, automatous, educational bureaucracy worked from a centre with clouds of paid officials. Germany and France are examples which no Christian Englishman—I will say which no free Englishman—will desire to follow. There is only one adequate check to this tendency, and that is that conscience shall be free and that the choice of education shall be free throughout the whole people. Mr. Dale thinks that he has a larger faith in English Christianity than I have. I doubt it: as I will show before I have done. But I think I have a larger faith in free and voluntary education than he has. Before 1870, with the annual pittance of 600,000*l.* a year, the people of England were hardly encouraged to spontaneous effort, and yet they founded schools for nearly two million of children. Show them now that to honest effort on their part help sufficient for their need is offered, and the hands that hang down will be lifted to resolute work. But this will never be so long as the Act of 1870 is unequally and unjustly worked for the exclusive creation of schools for which no voluntary effort is demanded.

9. I will close this array of disagreements by one more, which is, I fear, very deep. Mr. Dale says, "I have a larger faith than the Cardinal in the prospects of English Christianity. It is not dependent upon the success of his Eminence in getting a million a year *from the rates for the* support of denominational schools. *Let the secular education* of the people be provided by

secular authorities, and let the Churches, by whatever arrangements seem expedient to them, provide for religious education at their own cost, and out of school hours" (p. 75). I have already shown that we do provide religious instruction outside of the four school hours and without the State or public revenues, partly by the stipends paid to our teachers, and by the free personal work of our clergy. Therefore in what I add I have this always before me.

It is now fifty years since I began to work among the poor; and I think I know their state. The home ought to be the best school, but it is not so. A Christian people can only be perpetuated by Christian education; but Christian education is not to be given in the unaided homes of England—no, not even of the rich, or of the middle class, or of the poor. Where one home is full of Christian truth, a thousand are unable, by reason of toil or incapacity, to teach the children of the house. Christian education is to be perpetuated in England by Christian schools. It was Christian schools that made England; and it will be in the schools, Christian or deprived of Christianity, as it may be, that the future of England will be decided. Schools without Christianity will rear a people without Christianity. It is true that neither a million nor a myriad of millions of money will perpetuate Christianity. It will be sustained, as it was first diffused, by teaching, and by teaching all that the Divine Author of Christianity commanded us to believe and to do. Direct and certain evidence convinces me that the last ten years of the Act of 1870 have already done much to

weaken the power of Christianity over the schools of this country. How can it be otherwise? Before 1870 the whole school day was pervaded by Christian faith. Every book presupposed its truth; in many it was explicitly recognised. It is not so now. I am aware that five hours a week of religious teaching, if well used, may do much, and if zealously employed may do enough at least for individuals. But who that knows the irregularity of attendance, the want of punctuality in the morning, the weariness and the wandering of children in the afternoon, can fail to see that Christianity is put to every disadvantage, and embarrassed by every discouraging circumstance? Who that knows the unequal, imperfect, and perfunctory working of any extensive system depending upon human agency can fail to know how, with all effort to tend upward, we are continually tending downward? I am a firm and fearless believer in the future of Christianity in England. Nothing but extermination of Christians and Christian teachers can extinguish it. But I have little confidence in doctrinal Christianity without creeds. The history of latitudinarianism since 1688, of free-thinking since 1700, and of rationalism since 1840, is before us. The history of Presbyterianism, as in Lady Hewley's Charity, and of other forms of religious thought, is also known. If the religious teaching of the Board Schools be all that the people of England desire, as Mr. Dale says, then I need not add more proof that Christianity is already far in its decline. "*I am not insensible* of the widespread and wonderful *working of religion* in individuals: but what is the

state of the masses of the people? Thirty years of work and observation in London have taught me things that Mr. Dale cannot efface from my reason. The late Hugh James Rose, whose name is venerated in Cambridge and by many still surviving, if it be unknown to the younger men of this day, drew out with his wide knowledge of German literature the decline of Christianity in Germany. He traced its three periods—the first of rigorous dogma, from which men recoiled into a second stage of devout, indefinite pietism; which again issued in a third, the rationalistic rejection both of dogma and of pietism, and the reign of unbelief. I hope I may be deceived, but I believe that England passed from its dogmatic religion in the last century into its pietism in the time of Wesley, and that it is passing into its final period of rationalism and positivism in the educated, and of naturalism and materialism in the uneducated, classes. This downward tide no Board School education and no creedless Christianity can arrest. It is because I have a large faith in Christianity that I have no faith in education which deviates from the inheritance of Christian England. The schools of England were pervaded with Christianity down to the year 1870; their action may have been feeble upon the masses, and must have been feeble if the religion taught by schoolmasters in Board Schools is all that they desire. I do not believe it: I have better hopes, and a large confidence, and I do not speak without experience. The clergy and people of the Anglican Church will judge between me and Mr. Dale. Nay, *many among* the Nonconformists with whom I have

had correspondence will also be able to decide between us. A million of money will not touch the heart of the English people. I need no one to tell me that; and the phrase has a hollow sound. But the multiplication of Christian schools will touch and train both heart and will to the truth and life of our Divine Master. This is now at stake, and I impeach the unequal and unjust application or misapplication of the Act of 1870 as the peril which is impending over Christian England. Some men think that what was long ago has never been, and what is now far off will never come. But in my belief it is not more certain that two converging lines will intersect, though it be beyond the horizon, than that the steady elimination of Christianity from the schools of the people will rob England in the future of its Christian inheritance.

Though I would say much more, I must make an end. And my last word shall be the satisfaction with which I find that, in the midst of so many and irreconcilable disagreements, Mr. Dale agrees fully with me in the main point of my contention. I affirmed that the Board Schools would in the end crush or starve the Voluntary schools. Mr. Dale says: "I think the [School Board] system is certain to supersede the schools of the Denominationalists" (p. 70). My contention, therefore, is not only admitted but supported by the whole weight of Mr. Dale's reasons as well as by my own.

What will be the result of this upon the Christian education, the national character, and the Christianity *of England, I leave* for the present to the conscience *and to the common* sense of Englishmen.

IS THE

# CHRISTIANITY OF ENGLAND WORTH PRESERVING?

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# IS THE CHRISTIANITY OF ENGLAND WORTH PRESERVING?

THE rejoinder of Mr. Dale in the last number of this Review does not seem to me to answer my contention, (1) that the working of the Education Act of 1870 is unequal, and therefore unjust; (2) that this injustice ought to be redressed; (3) that all who pay the school rate ought to share in it; (4) that all who share the rate ought to obtain the aid of the State by voluntary efforts; and (5) that for the residual cases of absolute poverty the Government of the country must make adequate provision out of the public funds. Mr. Dale has not, in my judgment, shaken any one of these propositions. This is, however, no personal contention. It is the most vital of our national interests. It must not be narrowed to any personality. What duels are when armies are in the field, personal controversies are in a conflict which affects the welfare and the Christianity of the English people. It is enough that he and I are agreed that the Board School system will, in the end, displace our voluntary and Christian schools. I have affirmed that this will undermine the Christianity and the national character of our people. This affirmation I now take up, and to this subject I confine *myself.*

Until the Act of 1870 was passed, the schools of England were Christian. By the Act of 1870 the Christian education of England has been launched upon an inclined plane. Its steady future descent, unless promptly and adequately checked, is certain. In the present paper I will endeavour to confirm this assertion by facts at this day before our eyes, that is, by the examples of the United States and of France. We will then review our advance in England.

I. In the *North American Review* for December, 1880, is to be found a very thoughtful article by Mr. Richard Grant White, entitled "The Public School Failure." The author gives the history of its origin and development. The system began in New England. In Massachusetts in 1647, and in Connecticut three years later, it was enacted that every township of fifty householders should appoint a person to teach all children who should resort to him to read and write. He was to be paid by the parents or masters, or by the inhabitants in general. In every township of a hundred families there was to be a grammar school to fit youths for the University. This system of compulsory support of common and grammar schools spread all over New England. It spread also partially into the Northern and Western States.

In 1812 the Common School Act was passed for the State of New York. This law applied to towns and villages, but not, with two or three exceptions, to chartered cities. In the City of New York public *education was* in the hands of the "Public School *Society," a voluntary* and chartered association. In

1807 an Act was passed for its benefit, of which the following is the preamble:—

> Whereas the trustees of the Society for establishing a free school in the City of New York, for the education of such poor children as do not belong to, or are not provided for by, any religious society, have by their memorial solicited the aid of the Legislature—therefore, &c.

The purpose of this Act was to provide education for poor children not provided for by any religious society. In the year 1842 an Act was passed extending to the City of New York the public school system already existing since 1812 in the State of New York. But the Act did more than this. It created a Board of Education, and it placed the Public School Society, the Orphan Asylum, the Catholic Orphan Asylum, and other like societies, which were all voluntary, under the jurisdiction and supervision of the Board. The first effect of this is thus described by Mr. White: "Finding themselves in this position, the corporators of the Public School Society transferred their school-houses and all their other property with their rights to the Board of Education, and *the society ceased to exist.*" Other societies before long followed this example. "This event was a public calamity not only to the City of New York, but to the State; not only to the State, but to the whole country. Nor has the blight of its effect upon morals, upon politics, and upon education been confined to the country in which it was first felt." "*From that time public education passed rapidly into municipal politics,* and became an engine at once of political corruption and social deterioration."

The author then goes on to give the evidence of

inspectors and others as to the inefficiency of the normal schools, of the teachers, and of the pupils. But this I dismiss, as it may be said that the efficiency of teachers and schools is within our power to control.

But a far graver allegation follows, which I will give in his own words.

He begins by quoting the words of the Superintendent of the Board of Education at New York in the Report for 1879, which are as follows :—

> In our day, and in the condition of American life, we need all the power of an educated intelligence in order to lift the masses, as well as to maintain an equilibrium in the forces of society. The distribution of knowledge is as necessary as the distribution of light. We need the distributive power of systems of education which will reach the lowest abodes, and penetrate to the farthermost hamlets of the land. The best education of the people will then become the best government of the people.

This fascinating doctrine Mr. White rightly affirms to be unsound and utterly false. He says :—

> Knowledge will not lift the masses except as a balloon is lifted, because it is inflated with gas. Mere knowledge does not raise the quality of men's moral natures. . . . The light of a thousand suns will not sustain life without the genial warmth of one.

He then continues :—

> If ignorance were the mother of vice, and if our public-school system were what it is set up to be, the fruits of the latter would by this time have been manifest, plainly visible to the whole world, in our moral advancement as a people, in a higher tone in our society, in the greater purity of our politics and the incorruptibility of our legislators, in the increased probity of the executive officers of our State and Municipal Governments and of our corporate financial bodies, in the superior wisdom and *more solid* integrity of our bench, in the sobriety of our matrons, *the modesty of our* maidens, in the greater faithfulness of *wives, in the diminution* of divorces, in the steady decrease of

vice and crime and idleness, and vagrancy and vagabondage. . . . [After fifty years of common schooling] our large towns swarm with idle vicious lads and young men who have no visible means of support. Our rural districts are infested with tramps—a creature unknown to our fathers and even to us in our youth.

I am afraid of going on. Mr. White adds:—

The corruption of legislative bodies, open bribery at elections, a notable decline in the character of the bench, dishonesty in business, betrayal of trust so common as to escape shame, politics becoming a trade, and falling year by year into lower hands. Divorces have multiplied until they have become a stock jest in the facetious column of our newspapers. Crime and vice have increased, year after year, almost *pari passu* with the development of the public-school system. . . . Filial respect and parental love have both diminished. . . . This is the condition in which we are after more than half a century of experience of our public-school systems.

Mr. White says truly: "Do not tell me that this would have been even without it. Your only justification for the system was that by it all this would be prevented."

I should not venture to quote these statements from any but an American hand; nor would I quote them from any periodical of less established authority and weight than the *North American Review*.

Our next American witness will be the editor of a periodical published in California, under the title of *The Family's Defender*. Its object is to protect the rights of parents and the domestic life of the people. In an article of close argument the editor says:—

A candidate for governor who to-day ventured before the people on a platform of "Christian Education for Christian Children" would be hopelessly beaten at the polls, the majority of voters who cast their ballots against him being themselves professed *Christians*, but *brought up in the negative and essentially pagan atmosphere of the public schools*. . . . According to this system

every child is entitled to be educated at the public expense, and every parent is bound to send his children to the public schools. . . . Under this system it is not the parent, but the general public through its elected school directors, that select and dismiss the teachers, that rebuild and repair school-houses, &c. The general public, and not the parent of the child, have the authority to determine, in all cases of alleged sickness or other ailment, whether the child has sufficient reason to absent itself from school . . . to determine the course of study, the kind of companions with whom it shall associate, and what particular books the child shall study. And for his conduct the teacher is answerable, not to the parents of his pupils, but to the public school officials.

This system, the editor contends, "is essentially and intrinsically wrong;" it is "a palpable and perpetual violation of the moral law."

There are, the author goes on to say, three particulars in which this system is intrinsically unjust, and therefore intrinsically and essentially bad, apart from all religious arguments.

First, it is unjust to the taxpayer, who is forced to pay for the education of children whose parents can and ought to pay for the education of their offspring. Every parent is as much bound by the law of nature to educate his children as he is bound to feed and clothe them.

Secondly, it is unjust to parents. By the law of nature fathers and mothers have by right the guardianship of their own children. Parents have the right to control the education of their children. They are bound to select such schools and instructors as they believe to be safest and best for their children. They are bound *lso in duty to* watch over the associations of their *ldren, and to* control them with entire independence.

The Common School system violates all these rights, and obstructs all these duties. Parental authority is defeated, and filial affection and obedience are thereby diminished and destroyed. "The relaxation of parental authority has always been found one of the surest indications of the decline of social order, and the unfailing precursor of public turbulence and anarchy."

Thirdly, this system is unjust to the children. It strikes at their most vital and sacred rights. The Common School system withdraws the child from the influences which the law of nature has provided for its moral training and formation; and it substitutes, and can substitute, nothing in the place of the parental conscience, responsibility, love, and interest in the welfare and moral formation of the child. Children have a natural right to be trained and formed by the moral law. Schools without religion cannot give this formation; for morals are the relations between God and man, and between man and man. And these relations cannot be taught without teaching at least the religion of nature, and a knowledge of the Divine Lawgiver to whom we must give account. This the State refuses to teach, and yet it withdraws the child from the control of the parent, thereby making it impossible for the parent to confide the child to teachers of his own choice. "If God has made parents to prize the honour, the moral purity, the spotless virtue of their children to such a degree that no greater earthly calamity could befall them than its degradation and moral ruin, was it not in order that through parental *vigilance* and guardianship the child might be pro-

tected from the contamination and touch of vice?" The law of nature has invested parents with these responsibilities. Nature knows nothing of "school directors." But the Common School system robs the children of this parental guardianship, and commits them by compulsion to the school directors, the representatives of the "general public."

The editor sums up his case as follows:—

> First, we ask of every taxpayer that he assist us in the work of exonerating himself from the unjust burden of paying for the education of children—not his own—whose parents are abundantly able to pay for their education. Secondly, we ask every father and mother . . . to assert and maintain the true dignity and authority of the parental office. We ask that they, and not somebody else, be allowed to determine for their children who shall be their teachers, and who their companions.

I am obliged most reluctantly to omit much that is of great force and value in this remarkable impeachment. I can only add the words of the Bishop of St. Paul, Minnesota, in a letter of the 3rd of October, 1882. He says to the writer of the article here quoted:—

> If you need any words of mine to encourage you in the course you are pursuing, you have them from my heart. Every day convinces me more and more that the ground you have taken in defence of the rights of a family against the encroachments of the State is really the ground upon which the opposition to the State school system should have been based from the beginning. Natural rights as involved in this question no legitimate government will infringe or allow to be infringed upon due proof. The law of majorities, the *Vox populi*, has no weight against the claims of natural family rights.

Such is the Common School system in the American Republic, over which as yet the Platonic and communistic theory that the children of a State belong not

to their parents but to the State has never yet exerted its malignant spell. The American commonwealth has in it too much of English and Puritan blood, its vital relation to our seventeenth century is too vivid and powerful, to endure the theory that the children belong to "the general public," and that the State may create them in its own image and likeness. Nevertheless in its zeal for education it has admitted the false principles which legitimately lead to this conclusion. Education that is only *secular* dooms religion to gradual extinction. Education that is *common* violates conscience. Education that is *secular*, *common*, and *compulsory* violates the rights both of parents and of children. Logically on these principles the schools are schools of the State, the children are the children of the State, and their formation is at the will of the State against all rights, parental or divine. As yet these syllogisms are dormant beyond the Atlantic. They are awake and in pride of place beyond the British Channel. And to this we will turn next.

II. Most opportunely at this crisis of religious education in England, M. Jules Simon has published an account of the state of education in France. The parallel is so exact that all who desire to preserve our Christianity as a people ought to read and lay it to heart. I can only give a very brief and rapid summary of it.

In 1808 the Imperial University of France was founded. M. Simon calls it "une sorte d'église laïque," a kind of lay Church.[1] The whole education

[1] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, p. 115.

of the French people was centralised in this omnipresent and omnipotent authority. No man could teach without holding its faculties.[2] From that day to this the liberty to found schools and to teach has existed only twice and for a brief moment. It was granted by the Republic in 1848, and by the Assembly in 1871. Since then the Imperial revolutionary system has revived in its supreme power. The bishops in 1809-10 formed colleges for youths destined for the priesthood; the fathers of families, to save their sons from a Voltairean education, sent them to these colleges. A decree of 1811 at once subjected them in all things to the control of the University. In 1814 and 1815 religious education became once more possible, and it was energetically restored. The Revolution of 1830 placed once more in the hands of the philosophers what M. Simon calls "the great instrument of intellectual servitude."[3] They revived the University in all its omnipotence. It passionately vindicated its monopoly to teach. The professors and licensed teachers of the University were of all religions and of no religion. Then came the Revolution of 1848. The first act of the *Assemblée Constituante* was "to inscribe the name of God at the head of the Constitution." Liberty to teach was proclaimed as a right of nature, of which no citizen without injustice could be deprived, except for moral and personal unworthiness, judicially proved. After the law of 1850 free schools were multiplied and State schools diminished in number. The Second Empire instinctively

[2] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, p. 120 note. [3] Ibid. p. 136.

returned to the ways of the First; nevertheless it permitted much liberty of teaching, and it diminished the majesty of the University by creating colleges in the departments depending upon the *préfets*. The number of professors was increased, their salaries augmented. It respected the liberty to teach in primary schools, which had existed since 1833, and in secondary schools granted in 1850. But the hand of the State was upon all. M. Simon says that the Second Empire was despotic over the liberty of the press, but favourable to the liberty of teaching. He goes on to say that the Assembly of 1871 took up the tradition of the Assembly of 1848. Liberty of instruction and liberty of religious teaching were completely restored. From this date begins the conflict and the crisis to which I would call attention. The last twelve years have been an incessant assault of the so-called Liberal party against what was called Clericalism and the Sacristy; that is to say, in plain English, Christianity in politics and in education. The Assembly, nominally republican, contained within itself every shade of difference from reactionary monarchists to Red Republicans. The Amnesty of the Communards registered its degree of red heat.

On the 4th of September, 1874, and on a motion to permit the free foundation of universities, M. Challemel-Lacour sounded the first note in a speech of extreme frankness. He began by saying, "I will tell you that for my part I do not believe in that liberty," *i.e.* of instruction. "That question involves the highest interest, not only of the intellectual honour of *our country*, but even of the moral unity of France."

M. Simon says that at these words there "was great applause from the Left, for these words have a vast reach, and give the programme of the campaign afterwards opened by M. Gambetta and executed by M. Ferry." M. Simon adds: "To accomplish the moral unity of France, to hinder all who would interfere with the moral unity of France, all this either means nothing, or it means the religion of the State. All the difference between the ancient religion of the State and the new is, that the name of the old religion is Christianity and the name of the new is Nihilism." In a word, M. Challemel-Lacour foresaw that these new universities would be explicitly and energetically religious, or, as he said, "philosophical." He defined this as "an obscure region which envelopes that which is certain in science," and as "a domain delivered over to conjecture and the supernatural." This is a peril to the "intellectual honour" of France. And for the "moral unity" such universities "would every day multiply a race believing in one faith, one God, one Baptism,"[4] which would interfere with the moral unity of France—that is, "the unity of unbelief, the unity of positivism, the unity of independent morality." This moral unity has not yet been made in France, but it is rapidly making. It is the inevitable end, and the deliberate intention of those who at this hour sway the destinies, or rather are swayed by the lurchings, of that once great Christian people.

*Jules Ferry.* The next advance in this assault was made by M. *In a Bill* to amend the Act of 1875, he

[4] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, pp. 178-9, 182-3.

introduced the now famous Article 7 which took away the liberty to teach from all members of congregations or bodies not authorised by the State. This struck at once between 7,000 and 8,000 persons, the great majority of the best instructors engaged in teaching the French people. When Article 7 had been rejected, came the decrees of March, 1880. These took away the liberty to teach from fourteen thousand of the best educators of the women of France. They broke up numberless orphanages and works of charity.

We are not now concerned with the general anti-religious policy of the party at this time in power. It is enough to enumerate the series of attempts or acts which in the last two years have followed so rapidly. The abolition of chaplains for the army, of the judicial oath, of the emblems of religion in schools; the enlistment of ecclesiastics; the attack upon the grants for public worship, upon the Concordat, upon the civil condition of the clergy—all these are but signs of one and the same deliberate and downward movement, destroying every remnant of the ancient Christianity of the French people. Over all this we must now pass. We will come at once to the last words of this atrocious policy. They are *Laïçisation* and *Ecole Neutre*. The French language lends itself with a singular promptness to the irony of cynics. Our tongue is slow and cumbrous. The nearest approach is the word *Sectarian* to describe the schools of Christendom. Laicisation is clear enough. To laicise a school is to put out priest, brother, minister, and rabbi, and put in a *layman*. The University is, as M. Simon says, an Eglise

*laïque*, a lay Church. And the schools of the State must be lay, for the State is the lay society of the world, and the clergy belong to the sacristy. M. Ferry does not ask which are the better teachers. The instructors of the people must be laymen. There is an intensity of tyrannical malevolence in this: above all in France, where the great majority of the people still believe in Christianity. But the other phrase is less explicit. The neutral school is not one in which Catholic and Protestant may learn the alphabet together, nor where Christian and Jew may meet, nor where Christian and Deist may sit side by side. It is a school in which there is neutrality as to the existence of God, and therefore the State prohibits the pronouncing of His Name.

In 1882 a president of the schools, in making his official visit, said to the children: "People pretend that we wish to have schools without God. But you cannot turn a page of your books without finding there the name of a god, that is, of a man of genius, a benefactor, a hero of humanity. In this point of view we are true pagans, for our gods are many."[5]

Another president, addressing the masters and mistresses of schools, said: "You will oppose with success to the thick darkness with which teaching has always tried to veil and starve the mind of students, the teaching of science, which alone is true, for it gives to man the certainty of his proper worth, and impels him towards progress and light; while religious teaching plunges him fatally into an obscure night, and into *an abyss of lamentable* superstitions."[6]

[5] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, p. 350. [6] Ibid. p. 351.

Once more, another president said: "Young citizenesses and young citizens, you have just been told that we have driven God out of the school. It is an error. Nobody can drive out that which does not exist. No: God does not exist. We have only suppressed emblems."

The Prefect of the Seine in the Senate said of the most sacred of all emblems, "It is only a question of school furniture."

It will perhaps be said that all this is mere official chatter. We will therefore close this dismal narrative with a scene from Senators and *Préfets*.

The Minister of Public Instruction maintained in the Senate that "the name of God is an equivocal term, because it was equally applicable to the God of Christians and to the God of Descartes."[7]

In the Conseil Général of the Seine, on the 22nd of December, 1882, M. Robinet moved "That the ministerial instruction of the 27th of July, 1882, which renders obligatory the teaching of Deism, is in absolute opposition to the text and the spirit of the law." This was signed by six other members of the Conseil, one of whom said: "Nobody can prove the existence of God, and teachers must not be forced to affirm the existence of an imaginary being." The Conseil finally voted "That the teaching in all degrees of schools must be essentially lay." Is then a belief in the existence of God the essential difference between clericalism and laicism? M. Simon well says, "This neutrality has been imposed by atheists, and voted solely for their

[7] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, p. 352.

own interests against the faith and conscience of the immense majority of the French people."

I will give only one more fact before summing up the warning of the last ten years in France. On the 2nd of July, 1881, M. Simon addressed the Minister of Instruction in the Senate in these words: "You will not have the words 'religious morality.' You say they are equivocal." "Say the teachers shall instruct their pupils in their duties towards God, and towards their country."

Some of the Senators cried out: "There is no such thing as morality." Two days after this the Commission reported that the amendment was "useless, equivocal, and even dangerous." Nevertheless, the Senate passed it by a great majority. It was foreseen that the Chamber would reject it, because the name of God was *suspect de cléricalisme*. It was rejected: *on biffa Dieu*. God was struck out. M. Simon adds:—

> They had put out ecclesiastics and religious from the primary education. They had banished from the communal schools the symbols and emblems of religion. They had pursued the neutralisation of the schools to the most minute details. They had officially declared from the tribune that to speak of God without specifying whether it was of the God of Christians, or of the Jews, or of the Mohammedans, was equivocal, and that the introduction of that word into a law is a public danger.[8] The atheists make the law. This is pushing the respect for minorities very far.[9]

Well may M. Simon say:—

> We have abased those who have intelligence by subjecting them to the mob, and we have abased the mob by taking its faith from it. There, in two words, is our history.
>
> The elected wield over the ministers the despotism that the electors wield over them. The ministers obey the deputies, the *deputies the electors, the* electors the demagogues, and what is

[8] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, p. 371. [9] Ibid. p. 258.

the result? It is that at home there is no government, and abroad there is no France.[10]

I will add only one remark. Such is the development of godless education in France since the year 1871—that is, in the same twelve years that the Board School system has been confirming its grasp upon the English people. We will go on to the parallel.

III. In the year 1700 the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge was founded. One of its first and chief efforts was the religious education of youth. The popular education of children had not as yet become systematic. The domestic life of the people had not as yet given way as it has since. Home life still survived. Our great peril at this day is the homeless state of our masses. In the year 1808 the British and Foreign School Society was founded, to give elementary secular learning with the reading of the Bible. In 1811 the National Society was founded by the Established Church. Until 1833 the Government seems to have done nothing. In that year 20,000*l.* was voted to be divided between the British and Foreign and the National Societies. For six years this vote was continued. In 1839 the subject was taken up in the House of Commons. No one at that time dreamed of separating religious from secular instruction. The battle was between those who contended that the State ought to help in education, and those who denied that the State had anything to do with education. This theory was not the contention of Anglicans or of Catholics, but of the Congregationalists. In this pro-

[10] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, pp. 372, 378.

longed conflict, in the year 1847, Lord Macaulay made one of his most powerful speeches, rejecting with indignation both the theory that the State should do nothing in education, and that the State should do everything, which is the revolutionary or communistic doctrine now troubling America, tyrannising over France, and threatening England.

Parliament in 1839 fully recognised that the whole popular education of England had been created and sustained by the religious instincts and Christian self-denial of the English people. It therefore wisely and justly so framed its legislation as to give State aid to voluntary efforts, respecting as sacred the rights of conscience. This is in fact what is called the Denominational system, or State co-operation with religious liberty. From 1847 to 1851 the Government was engaged in making separate concordats with the several religious bodies. But the whole negotiation was based upon the principle enunciated by the Lords of the Privy Council in a letter of the 4th of July, 1840:—

> Their Lordships are strongly of opinion that no plan of education ought to be encouraged in which intellectual instruction is not subordinate to the regulation of the thoughts and habits of the children by the doctrines and precepts of revealed religion.

Lord John Russell was the author and prime mover in this whole policy. What was enunciated in 1840 he repeated on April 11, 1856.[11]

> One and all maintain that it is the duty of the Government, that it is part of the functions of the Government, to endeavour to teach somewhat of their duty to God and man, to the young *ll as to the old.*

[11] *Hansard*, cxli. 390.

A commission under the presidence of the late Duke of Newcastle reported as follows :—

It (the education system) has enlisted in the promotion of education a large amount of religious activity; and avoiding all unnecessary interference with opinion, it has practically left the management of the schools in the hands of the different religious denominations. In these respects it has been most successful.[12]

Such was the system of popular education down to the year 1870.

The first disturbing question in this settlement was the Conscience Clause. The demand was most reasonable on the part of Nonconformists in places were they could have no school of their own. But it was the grit which set the wheel on fire. And "the religious difficulty" was used by those who desired a pure secular system as a wedge to split in two the religious and secular instruction in our schools.

The Birmingham Education League led the assault. Its programme was as follows :—

NATIONAL EDUCATION LEAGUE.

*Object.*

The establishment of a system which shall secure the education of every child in England and Wales.

*Means.*

1. Local authorities shall be compelled by law to see that sufficient school accommodation is provided for every child in their district.

2. The cost of founding and maintaining such schools as may be required shall be provided out of the local rates, supplemented by Government grants.

3. All schools aided by local rates shall be under the management of local authorities and subject to Government inspection.

4. All schools aided by local rates shall be unsectarian.

[12] Report, p. 327.

5. To all schools aided by local rates admission shall be free.

6. School accommodation being provided, the State or the local authorities shall have power to compel the attendance of children of suitable age not otherwise receiving education.[13]

The Act of 1870 was brought in and justified on the ground of the vast numbers of schoolless children outside of the voluntary education of the country. Rather than describe the Act and its intentions in any words of mine, I will give it in the words of its authors.

In Committee on the Bill on the 16th of June, 1870, Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister, said :—

The machinery of voluntary schools we found not only existing in this country, but overspreading it to an immense extent, and on every ground, whether of that which is due to the promoters of those schools, to their benevolent and self-denying labours and the success which they have obtained, or whether on the ground of that which is due to the purpose which we have in view, and its effectual, speedy, uniform, and economical attainment, we adopted this principle also as a fundamental principle of this Bill, that we would frankly and without jealousy endeavour to employ the machinery of voluntary schools, as far as it was available, in aid of our object. But feeling that that large deficiency which is now observable in the country could not be made up by means of voluntary schools alone, we propose to fall back on the principle of rating, and to make use of it by way of supplementing the gap which we saw before us. . . . We may either forbid or compel a local board to aid voluntary schools; but if we forbid them, and make them leave voluntary schools, as they are, dependent on the modicum of aid which they now obtain from the Privy Council, that would not be consistent with the view with which this Bill was brought forward, and it would not fulfil the engagement under which all along we have admitted ourselves to lie—namely, that of giving fair terms to voluntary schools, so as to enable them to lend us all the aid they are capable of lending in the accomplishment of this great work, in which there is plenty for us all to do. Therefore, as our sole measure for dealing with that part of the case, we cannot forbid

[13] *Report of the First* General Meeting of the National Education ue, *Birmingham, 1869.*

the local boards to give aid to voluntary schools, because the promoters of those schools would be liable, equally with others, to contribute to the rate, and, contributing to it, to aid and found schools to compete with and beat down the school for which they were paying, out of their own private resources. This is a state of things we do not desire to bring about, and cannot be responsible for.

On the 24th of June, 1870, Mr. Gladstone used these words:—

As regards the existing denominational schools, it is a very grave and important question which we have to ask ourselves—whether we are frankly, ungrudgingly, willingly, and systematically to make use of that powerful agency for the purpose of good secular instruction, which is placed at our command in a great degree, if not exclusively, through the vigorous action of religious zeal and love? Let us not disguise from ourselves that this is a question of the greatest moment. The answer to it, I own, appears to me to be perfectly clear. The answer is, that nothing but folly could induce us to refuse to avail ourselves of an opportunity so valuable. If we do not avail ourselves of it, if we treat those voluntary schools as institutions either to be proscribed, or, at the best, only to be tolerated, limited, hemmed in, permitted to exist merely because they do exist—as things which it is not worth our while to recognise, or honour, or encourage, on what principle can we justify such a policy? On none that I know of, but that secular instruction becomes tainted by being brought into the neighbourhood of specific religious teaching. Under the provisions of the Bill the secular instruction given in the voluntary schools will be severely tested, and care will be taken that it shall be of as high a quality as that given in the rate-supported schools. It will be cheaper to the public, though it be dearer to the individual. On what principle, then, can we refuse to avail ourselves of the advantages which it is calculated to confer?

On the 28th of June, 1870, Mr. Gladstone said:—

Of course it was desirable that the promoters of voluntary schools should have full confidence in the general principles on which Parliament proceeded, and the Government admitted the *necessity of* the motion of the hon. member for Oldham (Mr *Hibbert*), and of showing that it was in the mind of Parliam

as a part of the measure, to provide increased means for the support of voluntary schools.

On the 22nd of July, 1870, on the third reading of the Bill, Mr. Gladstone said:—

It was with us an absolute necessity—a necessity of honour and a necessity of policy—to respect and to favour the educational establishments and machinery we found existing in the country. It was impossible for us to join in the language, or to adopt the tone which was conscientiously and consistently taken by some members of the House who look upon those voluntary schools, having generally a denominational character, as admirable passing expedients, fit indeed to be tolerated for a time, deserving all credit on account of the motives which led to their foundation, but wholly unsatisfactory as to their main purpose, and therefore to be supplanted by something they think better. That is a perfectly fair and intelligible theory for any gentleman to entertain, but I am quite sure it will be felt that it has never been the theory of the Government.

Such were the assurances of the Prime Minister in 1870.

Perhaps I shall be ascribing too much importance to a chance and extra-parliamentary utterance, if I quote the following words spoken by the present President of the Board of Trade at Birmingham, as reported in the *Daily Post* of the 16th of January in this year. They are so diametrically at variance with the words of Mr. Gladstone, they are so hostile and so full of menace —they are also a declaration so explicit of the Gambettist programme for England—that it may be well to draw out their full meaning. The italics are mine:—

It seems to me that this is neither more nor less than a great revolution affecting all our social prospects and conditions, and *in view of such a* change as that, I confess I am less inclined *now to go back upon the* defects and omissions of the Act of 1870 *than I am to congratulate* all who were concerned in that

measure, beginning with its author, down to those who took the smallest part in the agitation which made the introduction of the measure possible; to congratulate them on the results which have been attained, and the success which has attended its operations. In this stage of success we may well be content to wait without impatience *until the example which is being set us by other countries*, and our own experience, may bring about those further developments and reforms which will be shown to be necessary and expedient. The only question is, however, whether the controversy may not be reopened from another quarter, and in that case I dare say we shall not shrink, as my friend Mr. Dale has very recently shown, from a discussion we shall not have provoked. But I would be inclined to ask our old opponents—our friends, I will call them now—the advocates of denominational education—whether they are wise to raise again a controversy to the settlement of which we have, *with considerable reluctance, and for a time at all events, submitted*. I do not wonder that they are occasionally a little uneasy. They see their voluntary contributions diminishing, although not very materially; they find the competition of the Board Schools every day more vigorous; and under those circumstances it has suggested itself to some of them, perhaps not unnaturally, that it would be convenient that they should put their hand into the pocket of the ratepayer as well as of the taxpayer; and that it would relieve them from a good deal of difficulty if they could have a share of the School Board rate. *I would beg them to remember how much they have got already, and how little right they have to it.* . . . We thought in 1870 that when the State undertook national education for itself, the partnership which had up to that time existed with the State might be very well dissolved; and that the State having provided national schools, if there were any people who were unwilling to avail themselves of the education which was there provided, and wanted anything else, they must pay for it entirely by themselves. *But still we submitted, with more or less willingness according to the graciousness of our disposition*, to the compromise under which at the present time something like 1¼ million sterling is annually taken from the public taxes of the country, and paid over to the private managers of schools, which are mainly kept up by them, and avowedly kept up by them for *sectarian* purposes. I say that if the controversy is reopened we are bound to point out that there are also two sides to the question. It is interesting to observe in what direction public opinion is tending. Mr. Mundella has spoken of the gigantic

*efforts which are being made in France* in order to further national education in that country. The present position of the question owes much to *that great Republican* who has just died, and the premature termination of whose illustrious career is a *loss not to France only, but to the Liberal cause throughout the country.* But in France M. Gambetta made it a chief point in his policy to draw a sharp line of distinction between the Church and the State in all matters of education; and it is in that direction, I do not hesitate to say, that the *thoughts of men and the action of legislatures are constantly tending.*

I need not point out the contrast of these speeches. In the utterances of 1870 we have the intentions of men whose good will was perhaps greater than their foresight. In the Birmingham speech we have the aspirations of 1869 verified by the twelve years of our experience. Mr. Chamberlain gives voice to the confident hopes of those who have during that time made the Act of 1870 their own. We have no right, they say, to exist but by the graciousness of dispositions. The present working of the Act is a prelude to a time when Christian schools shall be in England as in France outside the law. The Birmingham scheme is the first instalment of "the Lay Church of England." Let us briefly contrast the two systems.

In the French system the whole education of the people, from the University to the primary schools, is, like the army and navy, governmental. Colleges, lycées, schools secondary and primary, belong to the State. The professors, masters, mistresses are patented by the State. The youth and children of France are claimed by the State. The formation of the citizens *is the right* and prerogative of the State. This policy *is the legacy of paganism* left by the First Revolution,

transmitted with modifications and checks by the First Empire to the Voltairean monarchy of 1830, and now developed once more by the Extreme Left of the Republic into its original Communistic excess by M. Challemel-Lacour and M. Paul Bert. The "moral unity of France" means the extinction of all forms of religion, belief, thought, consciousness, or moral life, which resist the uniform type of the French citizen taught, trained, shaped, fashioned and drilled, by an education in which the existence of God is a superstition, the name of God an equivocal term, and the moral law a group of conventional usages. The apostles of the First Revolution had read their Plato. The Communists of to-day have inherited his Republic without the trouble of reading. Children are not the children of their fathers and mothers, but of the State. The State is *loco parentis*. Citizens are to be reared like cattle, and to be broken like horses. Parental rights are absorbed in the State; the rights of the State are supreme. It is the State that forms men in its own image and likeness, and stamps them with its own superscription. M. Simon says, "The miserable and sterile society that such education would produce would be in France an edition of one man in thirty-six millions of copies."[14] Such unity, he truly says, is death. The government that does everything in education destroys parental rights, energies, and sense of responsibility. Parents are no more responsible for the intellectual and moral formation of their offspring than they are, as we are told, for the gaslight in the

[14] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, p. 252.

public streets. If the people of England are prepared for this condition of domestic and national life, I do not know them. But if the present working of the Act of 1870 be perpetuated, to this they will come; for the perpetuity of the Board School system means its extension, and its extension means the gradual extinction of the voluntary efforts and the self-providing and self-governing character of our people.

There still exists at this time in full vigour our great National system of education springing from the free will of the people, and maintained, as it was created, by their generosity and self-denial. This system, which I take leave still to call National, as distinguished from governmental, is both voluntary and Christian. It represents the mind and the Christianity of England from the time when England was made. No "universal, secular, gratuitous, and compulsory education" made our forefathers to be what they were, nor has it made Englishmen to be what they are now. We have no wish to be unmade and to be made over again. With all our faults we choose rather to remain a self-governing and a Christian people. We believe what has hitherto made us will continue its work. And we are convinced by the experience of the last ten or twelve years that a change is stealthily coming over our education. We have no wish for a "moral unity of England" to be brought about by universal Board Schools. I cannot refrain from here giving the words of M. Simon, which for eloquence and force can hardly be surpassed.

We deceive ourselves (he says) about our schools, about their purpose and their importance, if we see in them only the propagation of knowledge. We ought to seek and to plant in them the propagation of courage and of virtue. For a century we have been transforming the forces of nature and subjecting them to the service of man; but man himself is, and will be to the end of time, the greatest force under heaven. Not because he knows he must die, but because he has the will to die for his duty. . . . To learn not to fail when our brethren or our country call is to learn our duty as man and as citizen. Let us found schools to enlighten the intellect, but above all to strengthen the will. A people innumerable, with a vast extent of soil, however fertile, if they lack initiative and courage, is destined to decline, defeat, and contempt, but a handful of men with heart of oak, cast upon an ungrateful soil, will either find or make a way to success and a future. . . . They will be like Rome, or Venice, or England, or Holland, starting from a corner of the earth to conquer the world. It is not the loss of a battle, or the annihilation of an army, or a province torn away, that begins the fall of a people; a people dies only by the relaxation of its morals, by abandoning its manly habits, by the effacement of its character through the invasion of egoism and scepticism. It dies of its corruption. It cannot die of its wounds.[15]

Such are the fears of a Frenchman for France under an education without religion. Such is his appreciation of England. If we betray or surrender our Christian schools, how long shall we deserve his words? I may be asked, What then would you have? I answer equality for all schools before the law, and equal participation for all schools in the help of public aid, so far as their secular education demands and deserves it. I ask not a shilling for religions, much less for "Churches," as I have said, and as they ought to know who have brought this charge. They ought to know because they can know it; but such knowledge would ruin a cry. The inequality, and I must there-

[15] *Dieu, Patrie et Liberté*, pp. 295, 296.

fore say the injustice, of the present working of the Act of 1870 is patent, and cannot be disproved. Why should those who do nothing for themselves receive twofold aid, and they who tax themselves to the utmost receive nothing but what they earn? This has not been answered.

This inequality does not, I believe, exist in the Act itself. It results from subsequent minutes and codes and bye-laws.

The Act of 1870 embodies certain principles which all accept, that education shall be universal, and that it shall be provided for those who cannot provide for themselves.

The Act of 1870 does not embody the principle of excluding any schools, efficient in secular teaching, from State aid; nor does it purpose to destroy voluntary schools, nor does it desire to desecrate education by the exclusion of religion, nor does it accept even by instalment the French governmental despotism for the education of free England. All these things may be the aims, desires, and intentions of individuals in private and in public life. They were not the intentions of the Legislature. They are not yet to be read in our laws.

No one therefore asks for the repeal or the rescinding of the Act of 1870. As it was first drafted it would have met with wide acceptance. If it be restored now to what it was, a readjustment to the actual needs and rightful claims of the people at large might be *easily effected.*

*We have in full* action now, in the matter of educa-

tion, the same two principles which pervade our public life—the one the aid of Government, the other the voluntary efforts of the people. Down to the year 1870 these two worked harmoniously and efficaciously in co-operation, and, though distinct, yet in undivided unity. The first breach between them dates from the year 1870. The Education Act gave occasion for the separation, and the subsequent working has not only completed the separation, but has brought the two agencies, hitherto mutually helpful, into antagonism.

The effects of restoring once more the equal and just co-operation of the State and the voluntary efforts of the people would be:

First, to lighten the rates by eliciting more abundant voluntary contributions throughout the whole population.

Secondly, to awaken still more powerfully throughout the country a zeal, energy, and effort in the work of education which has already done so much, and, if it had been more largely stimulated and encouraged, would have done incalculably more. It was the parsimony of Government, first with its 20,000*l.*, and at last with its 600,000*l.*, that dwarfed and discouraged the voluntary efforts of the people. What men think they can do they will try to do, what they think is impossible they will not attempt.

The extension and efficiency of education would be promoted by this large, equal, and just treatment of all classes and conditions of the people.

But a deeper good also would be insured, that is, *the undiminished* vigour of our national character,

which, with all its faults, is the most law-abiding, self-governed, and mutually equitable character in the old or the new world.

The "moral unity" of a people when no "religious difficulty" divides them, is the highest, happiest, and best. But this cannot be.

The "moral unity" of a people drilled by State education and State pedagogues and State police is spectral and lifeless.

The moral union of a free people educating themselves by self-help and the public aid of the Commonwealth in liberty of conscience and a healthy diversity of culture is the vigour and maturity of a nation. This is still within our reach. If we hold fast by our English and Christian inheritance of freedom and faith, it is ours, and it will uphold us. If by our inertness we suffer the theories of Paul Bert, or, I must add, of Birmingham, to fascinate our minds or our legislature, we shall steadily descend the inclined plane on which not the Act, but the working of the Act of 1870 has placed the Christian education of England.

# THE FUTURE

OF THE

# PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

BY

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# THE FUTURE OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

THE Future of the Primary Schools is really the future of the people of England. Such as is the education of the children such will be the men of the next generation. I confine what I say to England, for the state both of Ireland and of Scotland is widely different from the state of the English people.

We hear much of our national character. What is it? Is it a fixed, intellectual, and moral type, which reproduces itself by a natural law, or is it a result of certain conditions, such as the influence of homes, the training of childhood, the controlling force of public opinion, of political institutions, and of religious teaching? If it depends on all these things, and in truth it does; and if all these have been and are continually changing, then their result must have proportionably changed, and the national character of to-day is not the national character of fifty years ago. One proof is enough. For six hundred years Parliament, which is the chief index of our national character, has known how to govern itself without closures and surgical appliances for keeping order. The national character was calm, grave, and deliberate. Order was *its normal* state; disorder abnormal. Our national

character has been steadily though imperceptibly changing, and the House of Commons has lost the gravity of self-control which made it the wonder of foreign Chambers and Parliaments. What has this to do with our Primary Schools? Everything. It is Parliament that frames our Education Acts and fashions our Primary Schools at its will.

Till 1870 the Primary Education of England was voluntary and Christian. Since 1870 one half of the population of England is under a system which is neither Christian nor voluntary, but secular and compulsory.

Can two systems so diametrically opposite in kind and efficacy produce one and the same result? The national character was chiefly formed in its Christian schools. What character will be formed in schools without Christianity?

Already this is proved in the United States. The Common School system is bearing its fruits. And it will be even more perceptible among us in England, because the education of our voluntary schools was, until 1870, chiefly religious. Its secular teaching was less precisely and sedulously cared for than its Christian teaching and discipline. This was turned to our reproach. Our condition at present is this. The Board Schools instruct a million of children in secular matter, but exclude all Christian doctrine. The Voluntary Schools are reduced during the school day to Secular Schools. No Christian doctrine can be taught in them *except out of hours*. They are subject to the fierce competition of Board Schools supported out of inexhaustible

rates; taught by teachers receiving salaries double in amount compared with those of Voluntary Schools; armed with the attractions of costly buildings and ample playgrounds, and all that public money can provide. In ten years they have drawn to themselves a million of children—nearly half the number gathered by the Voluntary Schools in fifty years. Can it be doubted that, in this unequal race, the system which is promoted by public law, paid for by public money, will not only check and outstrip, but starve and crush the system which lives only by private zeal and private self-denial; or, in other words, that the Primary Education of Christian England will, in a generation or two, be no longer in Christian Schools but in Secular Schools? We cannot gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. A Christian people can never spring from secular schools, and neither private zeal nor home education will suffice to supply the Christian teaching and formation which is excluded from the Secular Schools of the State.

The advocates of the Secular Schools were chiefly Nonconformists, who asserted that religion would be sufficiently taught at home and in Sunday Schools. Already we hear some of themselves declaring that Sunday Schools reach only the few that voluntarily attend, but do not reach the majority. Already we are told that the sons of Nonconformist homes are departing from the religion of their forefathers. But the poor of England are not Nonconformists. The Nonconformists are for the most part above the poor. They *are the* middle class. The Nonconformists are hardly

to be found in poor schools. And the Board Schools are therefore being managed especially under their influence. The Primary Schools of England are chiefly filled by the children of the Established Church, of the Catholic Church, and of the Wesleyans. These three bodies are the religious educators of the English people, and it is especially their voluntary schools that are now oppressed by the unequal favour shown by the Act of 1870 to the schools of the minority.

Let us never lose sight of the inheritance which is now at stake. Two systems are at this time in conflict.

On one side is the system of secular education, which as yet is only partially developed in England. It contains, nevertheless, in itself the principles fully developed in France, namely—

1. That education primarily and properly belongs to the State.
2. That the schools belong to the State.
3. That the children belong to the State.
4. That the State has no religion.
5. That the formation of the national character belongs to the State.
6. That the formation of the teachers of the people belongs to the State.
7. That no one shall teach the people except by patent of the State.

In a word, we are being stealthily drawn into a pass where these principles are foregone conclusions already embodied in the law of the land; and irresistible in *their future application*.

*On the other* side is the traditional Christian

education of the English people, which rests upon the following principles:

1. That the children of a Christian people have a right by Divine law to Christian education.

2. That Christian parents have a twofold right and duty, both natural and supernatural, to guard this inheritance of their children.

3. That Christian children are in no sense the children of a State that has no religion.

4. That their teaching and training, or formation as Christians, is of higher moment than all secular instruction, and may not be postponed to it, or risked to obtain it.

5. That in the selection of teachers to whom their children shall be intrusted, Christian parents have a right and a duty which excludes all other human authority.

6. That to deprive the poor of this right and liberty which is claimed by and yielded to the rich is a flagrant injustice.

Let no one be deceived by thinking that these two systems can be reconciled or mingled with each other. They are mutually exclusive. We have to choose between them. The sooner we make up our mind the safer for us. Every year we are losing ground. Every year the antagonist system, fraught with antagonistic principles, is penetrating the legislation and structure of the commonwealth, and tainting the brain and blood of the governing classes. It has already reduced the National Universities to schools of secular science and *secular literature*. It is throwing off Christianity from

the public life of the State, and relegating it to the private life of men. If the primary schools of England shall cease to be Christian schools, there may still be Christians in England, but the traditions of the English people will exist no longer. It will be Christian England only as it is Catholic France, by accident of numbers, or rather, by the compassion of God upon individuals, and not by its public law, or faith, or fidelity to God.

It is in this crisis of our country that God has once more restored to the Catholic Church both liberty and power. We are debtors above all men and to all men, to preserve inviolate, at all costs and at all privations, the unbroken and unimpaired tradition of Christian education in the whole circle of our Colleges and Schools, from the majestic and venerable Colleges of Stonyhurst and Ushaw, to the primary schools of our humble missions in the green villages and in the busy towns of England.

# A WORD FROM AMERICA

TO THE

# BOARD SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND.

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PHILOSOPHERS tell us that "Everything is perpetuated by the same principle from which it springs." One Who is greater than philosophers teaches us that "Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles." Everything after its kind. The Christian world sprang from Christian education; and Christian education from Christian homes; and both from Christian faith. The Anglo-Saxon race in England, in Australia, in the United States, is trying the experiment of suspending this law of Nature, to gather a vintage from the culture of thorns. Its scientific experiment is pushed still further. It is sowing thistles for a harvest of figs. For, though neither England nor the American Union has renounced the name of Christian, the State in both has declared itself to be altogether and only secular in its attributes and in its action upon its subjects. In England an Established Church still lingers. In the *Colonies and* in the United States there is none. The

State does not profess to rear a Christian people, but only a population of citizens. And for this end the American Common School system, the English Board School system, and the secular system of Australia are supposed to be sufficient, that is to perpetuate a race of citizens with civic virtues, and natural or even Christian morality.

But here is a deeper law to be encountered and overcome. The society of mankind springs from the unity, authority, and obedience of homes, and is perpetuated by parental care and by the domestic life of the people. Filial duty is the root of civil obedience. Home is the school divinely founded for the first and deepest formation of men. The natural society of mankind is ordered and perpetuated by a natural faith in God, and by a natural law of manifold and Divine obligations. Without God there can be no commonwealth. The education of every rising generation in the state of nature must be conformed to these natural laws, or men will be not formed, but deformed; and there can be no common life, or action, or interest, or commonweal among men. They grow up not citizens, but units: selfish, isolated, and lawless. If this be true even of natural society, how much more of Christian commonwealths? Education stripped of Christianity can never rear a Christian people. Like the fall of man, it is a state of privation.

If I had not been requested to give an opinion on the reading of the Bible in the Common Schools of the *United States*, I should not have ventured to speak *upon the subject*. It is enough for me to deal with

our newly-established Board School system. As an Englishman, I am bound to respect with great consideration the legislative and public opinion of our American brethren. But, being called on by an American to speak, I will not be silent. Nevertheless, I shall confine myself to the *ipsissima verba*, the very syllables of American citizens, and of some of great public responsibility. After I have laid this foundation I will, to the best of my power, answer the question proposed to me as to the reading of the Bible in the Common Schools.

Some years ago, in writing of the dangers of the Board School system in this country, I asked the question: "Is the Christianity of England worth preserving?" I then pointed out that although the Act of 1870, by which the Board School system was established, made provision for the secular teaching, it had made no provision for the religious teaching, in such schools: nevertheless, the religious instincts and conscience of the people of England had forced into almost every Board School throughout the land the Bible, and the daily reading of it.

Until 1870 all the schools of England had been positively and explicitly Christian; each denomination founded and taught its own schools, with a certain but small aid from Government. They were free, voluntary, and Christian. The Board School system introduced in 1870 was secular and lay. It excluded denominational Christianity, and the teaching of religion by the ministers of religion. In pointing out the inevitable consequences of such a system, I

quoted the results of fifty years of the Common Schools in America, and of the hundred years of the State education in France. The latter is outside of my present subject, and I will confine myself, therefore, to the former. I cannot do so better than by transcribing what I then wrote.

In the *North American Review* for December 1880 is to be found a very thoughtful article by Mr. Richard Grant White, entitled "The Public School Failure." He gives the history of the introduction of the system of State education into the State and city of New York, and shows how the Voluntary Schools from that date ceased to exist. Then he adds: "This event was a public calamity, not only to the city of New York, but to the State—not only to the State, but to the whole country. Nor has the blight of its effect upon morals, upon politics, and upon education been confined to the country in which it was first felt." "From that time public education passed rapidly into municipal politics, and became an engine at once of political corruption and social deterioration."

The author then goes on to give the evidence of inspectors and others as to the inefficiency of the normal schools, of the teachers and of the pupils. But this I dismiss, as it may be said that the efficiency of teachers and schools is within our power to control.

But a far graver allegation follows, which I will give in his own words.

He begins by quoting the words of the Superintendent of the Board of Education at New York in the *Report for 1879*, which are as follows:

"In our day, and in the condition of American life, we need all the power of an educated intelligence in order to lift the masses, as well as to maintain an equilibrium in the forces of society. The distribution of knowledge is as necessary as the distribution of light. We need the distributive power of systems of education which will reach the lowest abodes, and penetrate to the farthermost hamlets of the land. The best education of the people will then become the best government of the people."

This fascinating doctrine Mr. White rightly affirms to be unsound and utterly false. He says:

"Knowledge will not lift the masses except as a balloon is lifted because it is inflated with gas. Mere knowledge does not raise the quality of men's moral natures. . . . The light of a thousand suns will not sustain life without the genial warmth of one."

He then continues:

"If ignorance were the mother of vice, and if our public-school system were what it is set up to be, the fruits of the latter would by this time have been manifest, plainly visible to the whole world, in our moral advancement as a people, in a higher tone in our society, in the greater purity of our politics, and the incorruptibility of our legislators, in the increased probity of the executive officers of our State and Municipal Governments, and of our corporate financial bodies, in the superior wisdom and more solid integrity of our bench, in the sobriety of our matrons, the modesty of our maidens, in the greater faithfulness of wives, in the diminution of divorces, in the steady decrease of vice and crime and idleness, and vagrancy and vagabondage. . . . [After fifty years of common schooling] our large towns swarm with idle vicious lads and young men who have no visible means of support. Our rural districts are infested with tramps—a creature unknown to our fathers, and even to us in our youth."

I am afraid of going on. Mr. White adds:

"The corruption of legislative bodies, open bribery at elections, a notable decline in the character of the bench, dishonesty in business, betrayal of trust so common as to escape shame, politics becoming a trade, and falling year by year into lower hands. Divorces have multiplied until they have become a stock *jest in the* facetious column of our newspapers. Crime and vice *have increased*, year after year, almost pari passu with the

development of the public-school system. . . . Filial respect and parental love have both diminished. . . . This is the condition in which we are after more than half-a-century of experience of our public-school system."

Mr. White says truly: "Do not tell me that this would have been even without it. Your only justification for the system was that by it all this would be prevented."

I should not venture to quote these statements from any but an American hand; nor would I quote them from any periodical of less established authority and weight than the *North American Review*.

Our next American witness will be the editor of a periodical published in California, under the title of *The Family's Defender*. Its object is to protect the rights of parents and the domestic life of the people. In an article of close argument the editor says:

"A candidate for governor who to-day ventured before the people on a platform of 'Christian Education for Christian Children' would be hopelessly beaten at the polls, the majority of voters who cast their ballots against him being themselves *professed Christians*, but *brought up in the negative and essentially pagan atmosphere of the public schools*. . . According to this system every child is entitled to be educated at the public expense, and every parent is bound to send his children to the public schools. . . . Under this system it is not the parent, but the general public through its elected school directors, that select and dismiss the teachers, that rebuild and repair school-houses, &c. The general public, and not the parent of the child, have the authority to determine, in all cases of alleged sickness or other ailment, whether the child has sufficient reason to absent itself from school . . . to determine the course of study, the kind of companions with whom it shall associate, and what particular books the child shall study. And for his conduct the teacher is *answerable, not to the* parents of his pupils, but to the public-*school officials.*"

*This system,* the editor contends, "is essentially

and intrinsically wrong;" it is "a palpable and perpetual violation of the moral law."

There are, the author goes on to say, three particulars in which this system is intrinsically unjust, and therefore intrinsically and essentially bad, apart from all religious arguments.

First, it is unjust to the taxpayer, who is forced to pay for the education of children whose parents can and ought to pay for the education of their offspring. Every parent is as much bound by the law of nature to educate his children as he is bound to feed and clothe them.

Secondly, it is unjust to parents. By the law of nature fathers and mothers have by right the guardianship of their own children. Parents have the right to control the education of their children. They are bound to select such schools and instructors as they believe to be safest and best for their children. They are bound also in duty to watch over the associations of their children, and to control them with entire independence. The Common School system violates all these rights, and obstructs all these duties. Parental authority is defeated, and filial affection and obedience are thereby diminished and destroyed. "The relaxation of parental authority has always been found one of the surest indications of the decline of social order, and the unfailing precursor of public turbulence and anarchy."

Thirdly, this system is unjust to the children. It strikes at their most vital and sacred rights. The *Common* School system withdraws the child from the *influences* which the law of nature has provided for it

moral training and formation; and it substitutes, and can substitute, nothing in the place of the parental conscience, responsibility, love, and interest in the welfare and moral formation of the child. Children have a natural right to be trained and formed by the moral law. Schools without religion cannot give this formation; for morals are the relations between God and man, and between man and man. And these relations cannot be taught without teaching at least the religion of nature, and a knowledge of the Divine Lawgiver to whom we must give account. This the State refuses to teach, and yet it withdraws the child from the control of the parent, thereby making it impossible for the parent to confide the child to teachers of his own choice. "If God has made parents to prize the honour, the moral purity, the spotless virtue of their children to such a degree that no greater earthly calamity could befall them than its degradation and moral ruin, was it not in order that through parental vigilance and guardianship the child might be protected from the contamination and touch of vice?" The law of nature has invested parents with these responsibilities. Nature knows nothing of "school directors." But the Common School system robs the children of this parental guardianship, and commits them by compulsion to the school directors, the representatives of the "general public."

The editor sums up his case as follows:

"First, we ask of every taxpayer that he assist us in the work *of exonerating himself* from the unjust burden of paying for the *ucation of children*—not his own—whose parents are abun-*dy able to pay* for their education. Secondly, we ask every

father and mother . . . to assert and maintain the true dignity and authority of the parental office. We ask that they, and not somebody else, be allowed to determine for their children who shall be their teachers, and who their companions."

Such is the Common School system in the American Republic, over which as yet the Platonic and communistic theory that the children of a State belong not to their parents but to the State has never yet exerted its malignant spell. The American commonwealth has in it too much of English and Puritan blood, its vital relation to our seventeenth century is too vivid and powerful, to endure the theory that the children belong to "the general public," and that the State may create them in its own image and likeness. Nevertheless in its zeal for education it has admitted the false principles which legitimately lead to this conclusion. Education that is only *secular* dooms religion to gradual extinction. Education that is *common* violates conscience. Education that is *secular*, *common*, and *compulsory* violates the rights both of parents and of children. Logically on these principles the schools are schools of the State, the children are the children of the State, and their formation is at the will of the State against all rights, parental or divine. As yet these syllogisms are dormant beyond the Atlantic. They are awake and in pride of place in France.

Once more I beg the reader to remember that these words are not the words of an English critic, but of American citizens, loyal and patriotic; and one of them worthily confirmed by the Senate in the high and responsible office of Assistant Attorney-General to the Government of the United States. What Mr.

Montgomery affirmed years ago he has once more affirmed in his book entitled *The School Question from a Parental and Non-Sectarian Standpoint.*

Having in 1883 asked my own countrymen, "Is the Christianity of England worth preserving?" affirming as I do that the Board School system tends inevitably to its extinction, I will ask my American brethren, both Catholic and Protestant, "Is the Christianity of America worth preserving?" being rationally and firmly convinced that the Public School system also tends inevitably to its extinction. As I appealed years ago to the Christian conscience of England, in Anglicans and Catholics, and in Nonconformists of every name, so now I would appeal to the Christian conscience of the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers, and to those who forsook home, and all that the world counts dearest, for liberty of conscience, to defend themselves from secular meddling in faith and religion.

Mr. Montgomery's book is divided into seventeen chapters. Each chapter presents a new argument in condemnation of the Public School system. To do justice to this impeachment would be to transcribe the book. All, therefore, that can be done in an article is to recite the chief arguments, passing over the subsidiary proofs.

1. His first charge against the Public School system is that it is anti-parental; or, in other words, that it transfers the authority of parents to a Public *Board,* and subjects parents to its authority; thereby violating a Divine and natural law.

2. He gives statistics to show that in States where

parental authority is respected in education, crime, suicide, and insanity are notably less than in the States where the anti-parental Public School system exists.

3. He shows that the rights of all parents, Catholic and Protestant, Jew and unbeliever, are all alike violated, and that all are equally bound to vindicate the common rights of parents and children.

4. He then shows, by the evidence of moralists, jurists, and of the Roman Pontiffs, that the authority and right to educate their children are, by the Divine and natural law, inalienably in the parents as against all civil or municipal authorities.

5. He shows, further, the power of parents and homes in the formation of the character and life of men, and that no other power or agency can do what the law of nature alone can do. Common sense and experience prove this, he affirms, in the moral confusion and wreck of youth, both men and women, trained in the Public School system.

6. He then shows that morals cannot be taught without religion, and that the State, without violating its own constitution, cannot teach either.

7. He gives a scheme in seven propositions, whereby the State could recognise and subsidise only the secular instruction of the school system, leaving absolute freedom of choice to parents in conscience and religion.

8. Lastly, he shows the danger of inefficient and immoral teachers, and the certainty that the good and efficient teachers, through dissatisfaction with the Public School system, are withdrawing from it.

*I can but give a few of the proofs offered for thi*

contention, and then comment on certain of the main points of the argument.

His main contention rests upon two assertions.

1. That the authority and rights of parents, which are founded on the natural and revealed law of God, are violated by the Public and Common School system.

2. That the exclusion of religion from the schools excludes also the teaching of morality, and that such negative instruction is not education, and deprives the young of such formation of character as will protect them from vice and crime, and signally destroys filial obedience and the love and shelter of home life.

I. We will now take the first of these assertions:

The New England Public School system, which for two hundred years was confined to a certain number of the States, is now by law established throughout the whole American Republic.

Mr. Montgomery distinguishes the two systems of education, which subsisted side by side down to 1860, as the Parental and the Anti-parental. And he takes as the test of their efficiency the moral and physical results. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

He says: "Keeping steadily in view . . . that a people *properly* educated are more moral, virtuous, contented, happy, and law-abiding than an ignorant people, let us suppose that we somehow find living side by side two communities, one of which is made up almost entirely of educated people, while the other is largely composed of illiterate people; and let us further sup-
*pose that amongst* those considered educated you find
*in proportion* to their population they have six

criminals where the more illiterate community has but one," nearly two paupers where the illiterate have but one, two insane to one, four suicides to one, three deaths from indulgence of brutal passions to two—"what conclusion would you arrive at with reference to that kind of education?" [1]

He then takes a group of six New England States, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, for educated States; and for unlettered States the six States of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

The first six States had 2,665,945 native-born white inhabitants, of whom only 8543 could neither read nor write; the last six had 3,181,969, a larger population, of whom 262,802 adults could neither read nor write.

Now these two groups started originally under conditions almost identical of race, language, laws, manners, and religion. The Bible was their guide.

There was one point in which they differed. "More than two hundred years ago the principle was incorporated into the Legislation of Massachusetts that *the whole people must* be educated to a certain degree, *at the public expense*, irrespective of any social distinctions."

"In the six New England States the proportion of illiterate whites was only one to every 312, while Virginia and her five sisters counted one illiterate to every 12." "How stand the criminal lists? Massachusetts and her five sisters, out of her native population of a little

[1] *The School Question*, &c., pp. 9, 10.

more than two and a half millions, had on the 1st June 1860 just 2459 criminals in prison ; while Virginia and her five comparatively unlettered companions, with a native white population of over three millions, had but 477 in prison "[1]—that is, the New England six had one to every 1084; the other six, one to every 6670. So, again, as to pauperism, there is one to every 178 against one to every 345. Suicides were as one in every 13,235 as against one in every 56,584; of deaths from criminal passions, one in 84,737 as against one in 128,729 ; and of insanity one in every 800 as against one in 1682.

All this needs explanation, which has never been given. It is easy to foresee many cavils, but the substance of the impeachment cannot be refuted.

The conclusion is inevitable and peremptory. There is something wrong in the system of education. What that is we shall hereafter see.

The same system of education, with the same results, has been founded in California, which now outstrips Massachusetts in its proportion of criminals. This the newspapers of San Francisco are beginning to see. The Boston correspondent of the *Morning Call* says that "a large number of Public School men have come to the conclusion that the Public School system of that city is a failure." [2]

The *Alta California* calls the Public School system "our anaconda," and adds : "If we are to judge this system by its apparent fruits, we shall have to pronounce it not only a melancholy but a most disastrous

[1] *The School Question, &c.*, p. 11. [2] Ibid. p 18.

failure, and that it will be idle to look for the cause of the general rowdyism, idleness, and viciousness of the rising generation anywhere but in the training which it has been receiving."

On March 28, 1874, the Californian Legislature enacted: "That every parent, guardian, or other person . . . having charge or control of any child or children between the ages of eight and fourteen years shall be required to send such child or children to a public school," unless such child or children are excused from such attendance by the Board of Education of the city.[1] "The parents must show *to the satisfaction* of the Board that the bodily or mental condition of the child renders it unable to attend. The parents are thus stripped of the guardianship of their children, and are dependent on an irresponsible Board of School Trustees."

Since 1850 the State of New York has increased its expense for schooling by more than three hundred per cent, and the increase of crime is over five hundred per cent.

In the last thirty years the school expenditure in Illinois has increased fourfold, and the ratio of crime in the white population has also quadrupled.

In order to prevent crime, Massachusetts in 1647 gave the educational control to the public, and after over two hundred years' trial—to wit, in 1860—had a native white criminal to every 649 people. Virginia, down to 1860, had always left the educational control of children to their fathers and mothers, and

[1] *The School Question*, &c., p. 19.

the result was one criminal to every 6566 inhabitants.

Mr. Montgomery gives in full the Official Statistical Tables on which his statements are based, and says: "In the face of these startling statistics, is it not high time for those who claim that the present Public School system tends to diminish crime to point out at least one State, or one fraction of a State, where the system has not produced exactly the opposite result?"

And once more, to guard himself against the imputation of saying that "education leads to crime," he says again it is a "*false system* of education"[1] against which this charge is brought.

This transfer of parental authority to the public has inevitably produced a subjection of parents to the school-teachers. By the law of nature and of revelation parents are charged with the duty, and have also the right, to nurture and train their own offspring; to rear and to educate them; to choose the teachers, companions, schools, and kind of education their children shall receive. This is violated and subverted at one blow in the Public School system.

By the 654th section of the Penal Code of California any parent is guilty of a misdemeanour "who upbraids a teacher of any public school in the hearing of a pupil." A most just provision, if the upbraiding be petulant or needless. But what if it be for patent and evident immorality? It may be imprudent, but certainly not

*ıal.*

[1] *The School Question*, &c., p. 102.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in his Biennial Report for 1864, quotes the judicial decisions of some of the Eastern States, and maintains that "*the child should be taught to consider his instructor in many respects superior to the parent in point of authority*," and *that the vulgar impression that parents have a legal right to dictate to teachers* "is entirely erroneous, and, further, *that parents have no remedy as against the teacher*." "If his conduct is approved by his employers (the Public Board) the parents have no remedy against him or them." [1]

If the parents of the United States submit even to the enunciation of such pedantic enormities, they are the most submissive of free people. In England such intolerable language would light a flame in every home.

On all this Mr. Montgomery, with great truth and force, writes as follows: "Thus the law of Nature and Nature's God, which ordains that it is both the right and duty of parents to educate their children, and 'in such manner as they believe will be most for their future happiness,' is utterly disregarded and set at naught by the State, which ordains that it is neither the right nor the duty of parents, but of the State, to say when, where, by whom, and in what manner our children shall be educated." [2]

"Hence it is, and we assert it without the fear of successful contradiction, that those communities which have so long and so glaringly violated nature's laws in the matter of education are now reaping so heavy

[1] *The School Question*, &c., p. 102. [2] Ibid. p. 52.

and so deadly a harvest of crime, pauperism, insanity, and suicides."

II. The second cause of the failure of the Public School system to produce personal or public morality lies, as Mr. Montgomery contends, in the absence of religious and moral teaching. Washington had insight and foresight enough to say, "Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion." Morality is the code of duty arising from the relations of man to God, and of man to man. How can these relations be known without religion, revealed and natural? And how can the State teach morality without, so far at least, departing from its professed neutrality as to religion? Mr. Montgomery says: "We say, let the State neither undertake to teach nor to pay for the teaching of morality or religion, because it is impossible to teach a State morality without teaching a State religion; and it is impossible to teach a State religion without the destruction of the religious liberty of the citizen. Should the State ever assume the burden of paying for religious teaching, its next step would logically be to assume the right to say what that religious teaching should be."[1]

But the Public School system makes no provision for the liberty of conscience. All children are compelled to pass through the common school, in which neither religion nor morality can be taught.

It is idle to say that religion and morality can be *taught in Sunday*-schools, or by parents at home. A *religion once a week* is not the religion of Christians;

[1] *The School Question*, &c., p. 70.

neither can men be formed and trained by talk on a Sunday afternoon. It needs the constant and continuous action and influence of parents and of teachers from infancy to the age of reason, and from the age of reason to the riper years of youth, to form the mind, heart, conscience, will, that is the character of a nation. Mr. Montgomery has drawn out with great force of reason, and a vivid human sympathy, the power of a home, with all its charities, chastities, and sanctities, over sons and daughters, not only in childhood, but after they have entered into the perils and perplexities of life. Of this, as he contends, the Public School system robs the rising generation of the American people. The results of fifty years are already seen. What will be the end thereof all men may prophesy. "In the month of December 1881 a California State Teachers' Institute was held in San Francisco. With scarcely a dissentient voice, it was declared that the children of our Public Schools were addicted to 'lying and dishonesty.'" [1]

Again, "A committee of Massachusetts ladies made a report declaring 'that the teachers almost universally complain of the prevalence of lying, stealing, profanity, and impurity among their scholars.'" [2]

And, what is more, the Legislature of Massachusetts two hundred years ago enacted "that the whole people must be educated to a certain degree; that all children shall be educated at the public expense, irrespective of any social distinctions." [3] No doubt the aim of this

[1] *The School Question*, &c., p. 115. [2] Ibid. p. 97.
[3] Ibid. p. 10.

levelling theory is to bring about a universal equality by education, which history shows to be unattainable; or, if transiently attained in youth, certain to be destroyed at once as soon as men or women enter upon their careers in life. "Naturam expelles furca tamen usque recurret." It is evident that, in this arbitrary and unnatural attempt to reverse the laws of Providence, the great majority of children are trained for a career which to them is impossible; and are not trained for the lot which inevitably awaits them when they leave school and fall back into their old homes. Many a father and mother toils night and day to clothe a son for the common school in a fitting garb, like his richer companions. When he leaves school, with hands unused to manual labour, and with thoughts and cravings for which his home gives no satisfaction, how can he be content with his humble lot? and how can he be free from the temptations which surround a discontented man? It is this danger that is now forcing itself upon the conscience of men in every condition and profession in America. A generation of young men is rising for whom there is no provision either in their homes or in the public life of the States. They can find no employment suitable or proportioned to their training, and are therefore driven by disappointment into courses disastrous to themselves and to society. So long as the social state by uncontrollable laws develops social inequalities, it is useless and perilous *to educate all men* as if society were a dead level, *irrespective of any* social distinctions."

*I will now* answer the question proposed to me,

whether the Bible should be read in the Public and Common Schools of the American Union.

I rejoice that it is read in the Board Schools of England, even without a right interpretation. It is better that children should know the Name, the character, the work, the life, the parables of the Saviour of the world, than that they should grow up without the knowledge of His Name. But it is to be always borne in mind that the Bible is "the Bible only in the right sense of the Bible." A man's will is his will only in the intention of his will, and human justice swiftly punishes the perversion of the last testament of the departed. But with the law and practice of the Public and Common Schools before me, I cannot see—

1. How the State can retain its purely secular character and action if the Bible be introduced into the schools. The Bible is immutably a Code of religion.

2. Nor how the State can order its introduction without violating the religious conscience and spiritual independence of the American people.

3. Nor how the reading of the Bible in any sense but its own true sense can educate the children of Christian parents.

4. Nor how the reading of it can counterbalance the intrinsic moral evils of the Common School system, especially in the violation of parental authority, and the destruction of the instincts of home.

The State has a right to protect itself from the crimes committed by children who are abandoned by *vicious* or careless parents. It does so by Reformator

and Industrial Schools. The State has a duty to protect the children abandoned by careless or criminal parents, and notably to protect the rights of such children to the inheritance of a human and Christian education.

For these two ends compulsion is lawful and just.

What parents ought to do, and through their own unnatural abandonment of their children do not do, the State has both right and duty to provide for, *in loco parentis*, which phrase declares that the State is not the parent, and that the children are not the children of the State. This theory of Athens in its corruption, and of France in its revived paganism, has no place or right in Christian, or even natural society. Ancient Rome would have made short work of all such pretensions of the State in violation of the *patria potestas*.

If there be in the world a people jealous of liberty of conscience, and resolved to confine the powers of the State within the strict sphere of secular legislation, it is the people of the American Union. But they have unconsciously submitted to a system of public and compulsory education which violates both these vital laws of their Constitution.

Compulsory education without free choice and provision for that free choice in matters of religion and conscience is, and ever must be, unjust and destructive of the moral life of a people.

It is not for me to suggest to the mature wisdom and the high jurisprudence of the statesmen of America w *the Public School* law should be amended. It is y *in conflict* with both parental rights and liberty

of conscience. No education law can prosper which is not in conformity with parental rights and liberty of conscience. A State education which is in conflict with these two laws of nature and of God can only work out confusion and end in a catastrophe.

I have written these pages with great unwillingness, lest I should seem to be wanting in amity and comity to my American brethren. It is not I that have spoken, but those who love their own free and Christian land too dearly to be silent when danger is seen to be at hand. S. Gregory, the Apostle of the English speech, says that to be silent when evil is coming is to betray the flock. *Fugisti quia tacuisti.* Silence is flight. Americans have lifted up the voice of warning. I am only a sad and reluctant echo.

# THE EDUCATION COMMISSION

AND

# THE SCHOOL RATE.

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SURELY a Nemesis is brooding over us. Everything we do becomes a party question. Nothing is sacred or sheltered from the din and taint of party. Nothing can be treated on its own merits. The most vital interests of our public and private welfare are dealt with as means to overthrow or to strengthen a Government or a party. We should have thought that the education of helpless and innocent children would have been holy ground on which the hoof of party could not have stamped itself. But no; there is hardly a duty or work of our national life which is more bitterly and jealously handled than the education of our children. Why is this? In a word, it is because the revolutionary spirit, which will celebrate its first centenary in this year, long ago discovered that Christian education perpetuates the Christian world; and that, to exclude Christianity from the public life of men, nothing is needed but to exclude Christianity from the schools of a people. Children are the roots of a nation. Cut the

roots of a forest and the land will soon be cleared; nature and decay will do it for us.

But the Nemesis which is upon us in England is not the anti-Christian revolution of France. Excepting a handful of scoffers, mockers, and featherheads, we have none of the hatred of God and of Christ which has blighted the great Christian people of France. The people of England, Scotland, and Ireland are in the main profoundly Christian. They have no sympathy with the anti-Christian chatterers who believe themselves to be the lights of the world, and walk among us with heads aloft as if they pitied men. No; if it were only this, we should soon part asunder into two camps, Christian and non-Christian. Our Nemesis is far more subtle and dangerous. It is that Christian men are divided; they cannot agree; they have been born into an atmosphere of contradiction, and their first principles are at variance. There was perhaps never a more evident and normal example of this heirloom of confusion than the Royal Commission which, after two years and a half, closed its work on July 18th of last year.

It is not for any one to ask how nearly the twenty-three members of the Commission were united in Christian belief, nor how far they were wide of each other; but I believe it may be affirmed with certainty that not one of the twenty-three would disclaim the name of Christian, and that all alike desired to insure the moral and Christian education of the English people. They differed as to the means of effecting it, or as to *the measures* of more or less in administration and *agement.*

Nevertheless the Commission issued a majority report, a minority report, a minor report, and a minim report, with satellites of minute reservations, &c. Here is our Nemesis. Notwithstanding their unity of purpose and their ardent zeal for education, the twenty-three men could not agree. They were scattered in groups, neutralising each other.

This fact at least shows two things : first, that the Commission fully and fairly represented the divergencies which divide the people of this country; and secondly, the perfect liberty of discussion and decision enjoyed by every one, even to the isolation of private judgment.

The Commission represented four distinct parts of our population : the Established Church, the Nonconformists, the Catholic Church, and a residuum which cannot be classed under any of these three heads ; or, to make a simpler division, it represented the two systems now existing: the Voluntary and the Board School. Each of these two systems had a fair and proportionate representation on the Commission. The number of schools possessed by the Voluntary system—that is, by the Church of England, Nonconformists, and the Catholic Church—are as fourteen thousand out of eighteen thousand; that is, more than three-fourths. On the Commission the majority was as fifteen to eight. The representatives of the Voluntary Schools were therefore only as two-thirds. The minority of eight more than adequately represented the rest of our population. If they failed to carry the Report in their *own sense*, it was only because they were a minority

not only on the Commission, but in the country; and, moreover, only partially in agreement among themselves.

But the Nemesis which is upon us is not only in the confusion of opinion which hinders agreement and co-operation in this most vital matter; it is also, as we have said, that the education of children has become a matter of political rivalry and of party contention. There is no good in bewailing this fact. Our duty is to accept it as inevitable, and to meet it like men.

Let us therefore examine it as a question of political justice. The history of our national education is as follows:

From the time that England became a united people and had the English name, the education of the people of all classes has sprung from, and has been maintained by, the voluntary action of parents The poor were aided by the rich. The conscience and self-denial of Churchmen and laymen founded our colleges and schools. From this source came all the endowments that created the education of parishes, and monasteries, and of our first grammar schools and colleges. The two old Universities were the highest reach of the Voluntary system. From time to time education spread itself over the country; inadequately indeed as the population grew, and insufficiently as Dissenting sects multiplied. The schools were schools of the Established Church, and with rare exceptions the Dissenters had no schools of their own. In the beginning of this century the British School system, in which the Bible was read, arose. It was a system

created for those, and by those, who dissented from the schools, if not also from the Church of England. Education was then so purely a religious, and not a political, matter that no Government took part in it, or even cognisance of it. Down to 1833 no Government troubled itself about it: not a sixpence of public money was voted for it. The first grant was the miserable pittance of 30,000*l.*; then in 1836 it was increased to 40,000*l.*; in 1849 it rose to 125,000*l.*; in 1869 it was 798,000*l.* And at that time the Voluntary system had been raising and spending 1,200,000*l.* a year. It had formed more than 11,000 schools, in which were taught more than 1,000,000 children. The Government had done little, the Nonconformists had done nothing, save only those whose zeal and self-denial, as the Wesleyans, had united them in the Voluntary system. The great majority of Nonconformists contented themselves with building a chapel and supporting a minister, leaving the children to their parents. The 2,000,000 of schoolless children were chiefly either children of the Dissenting bodies, or children altogether neglected. The wastes of England were their wastes; and they lay desolate because those who ought to have gathered them into schools did not move a finger to educate them.

The Government of 1869-1870 saw this intolerable waste, and did their duty by losing not a moment in founding schools into which these outcast children might be gathered. For this the Act of 1870 was passed. A new system, without catechism or even the Bible, was founded. The old Voluntary system was

praised, and still helped by Parliamentary grants. Its multiplication was helped for six months. After that date no aid to build new Voluntary Schools was permitted. So far as the State is concerned, the old national education was struck with sterility. But the new system, for which nobody had laboured or had given a sixpence, was established and endowed with a twofold and inexhaustible income, partly from the Parliamentary grants, and partly from local rates of unlimited amount. To redress this visible inequality it was made possible for the Voluntary Schools to earn more from the Parliamentary grant. But this provision was extended equally to Board Schools. They can earn the same amount of Parliamentary grants, and equals being added to unequals, the wholes were still unequal. There was therefore no redress. The result is that the Voluntary system, which till 1870 had done everything, received help from only one source of public revenue; but they who had done nothing received help from two sources of public money, of which one has no limit. The Voluntary system has no aid for its extension; the Board School system has an absolute power of extending itself over the whole country. The Voluntary system can only exist by its own self-denial; the Board School system, without contribution of a sixpence from any of its members, is wholly supported by public money. The Voluntary system is compelled to pay the education rate for schools it conscientiously *refuses to* enter, and has also to support its own *schools. The* School Board system spends millions *of public money* in maintaining and multiplying

schools to which the great majority of the English people cannot in conscience send their children.

This, then, has become a question of party politics. Let us therefore try it by the test of political justice.

It is a first principle of political justice that all who pay a public impost, rate, or tax should share its benefit. The education rate is exclusively applied to a system of education which the majority of the people cannot share without grievance of conscience. The Board Schools are offered to the people of England on the condition that their children shall be educated without catechism or positive Christian doctrine. This is a condition known beforehand to be of impossible acceptance. They who imposed this condition knew it at the time, or have come to know it now. If they knew it then, they deliberately committed an act of political injustice; if, knowing it now, they persist in excluding all who pay rates from sharing the rate, they are knowingly and willingly committing a political injustice. They have established and endowed the schools of a minority. They offer a share in these schools on the acceptance of a morally impossible condition. They have established and endowed a new religion which is no religion; and they compel the payment of rates for its support. The old Church rates were just in comparison with this new Church rate. They came down from the time when Englishmen were of one religion, when as yet there were no divisions; this new religion or new Church was founded in 1870, and imposed *by fine, distraint,* and imprisonment upon the majority *of the English* people. The forefathers of the Non-

conformists would have risen against such an injustice. They would have pulled it down. Their descendants are the chief builders in setting it up again. The Liberation Society has looked on and made no sign. In truth, the Liberationists were among the most ardent partisans of the Act of 1870. The Parliament of 1868 was a Nonconformist Parliament. It was elected to disestablish one half of the united Church of England and Ireland, and the Liberationists were on the war-path to disestablish the other half; but, failing of that, they set up by the way an establishment of their own; exclusive, enormously endowed, and capable of universal extension.

Now, the Bill of 1870 admitted all Elementary Schools to share the school rate. The Act of 1870 excluded the Voluntary Schools from the rate. The later administration of the Act has accentuated and perpetuated this injustice. Having said this, it is a duty to add that nothing was further from the mind of Mr. Forster than to commit this act of political injustice. The first draft of his Bill rested on the principle that all who pay should share. He believed two millions of children to be growing up in the ignorance which ends in moral ruin. His heart, which was vividly sensitive in its compassion, urged him onward to provide with the utmost speed for the gathering and saving of these forsaken children. His whole bringing up from boyhood predisposed him to sympathise more in the spirit than *in the doctrines* of Christian belief. He thought he *had adequately* provided for religion in admitting the *reading of the Bible.* His firmness on that point all

but lost him his seat at Bradford. He saw that no voluntary subscriptions would provide the schools instantly demanded; that nothing but public funds could found them or maintain them. He believed that the Voluntary Schools with an increased aid could still subsist; and as yet the administration of the department was in his own hands. The vexed questions of "suitable" and "unnecessary schools" had not arisen. He certainly had no will to starve or to destroy the Voluntary Schools; and when he began to see the fierce competition of certain School Boards, he declared publicly that such a policy was never in his intention or his thoughts. Nevertheless, the political injustice is in the very marrow of the Act of 1870, and its later administration has forced it on public notice. So much has here been said to detach the memory of one of the most noble-hearted, generous, and fearless of men from a system of which he did not foresee the consequences as the Birmingham League did. We have, therefore, at this time no system of national education. We have two irreconcilable systems, of which neither could ever become national without extinguishing the other; and of which neither can ever become universal because neither can extinguish the other. Faith will not die out in Dissent; and Dissent, so far as we can foresee, will never be gathered up into unity of faith. Both faith and unbelief will spread, and their points of contact, to the distraction of education and the perpetuity of conflict, will be multiplied.

The Report of the Royal Commission on Education in 1861 gave, so to speak, the Charter of the Voluntary

Schools of England. The Act of 1870 gave the Charter of the Board Schools. The Report of the Royal Commission of 1888 has laid down the outlines of a measure of national education, in which the two systems may be united in peace, with liberty, equality, and justice to both.

The Commission recommended that all statutable Elementary Schools should receive a fixed grant from the local Education Rate. The words are as follows:

"182. That it is reasonable and just that the supporters of Voluntary Schools should retain the management of these schools on the condition of bearing some substantial share of the burden of the cost in subscriptions. But it does not seem either just or expedient to allow the Voluntary system to be gradually destroyed by the competition of Board Schools with unlimited resources at their command.

183. That there is no reason why the principle of Voluntary Schools receiving annual aid from the rates should not be extended, and rate aid, in respect of their secular efficiency, should not be given to Voluntary Schools (as it is now given to Industrial and Reformatory Schools) without the imposition of the Cowper-Temple clause which, under the Act of 1870, affects those schools only which are provided and supported entirely by the rates.

184. That the rate for this payment should, in the case of a school attendance committee, be chargeable on the separate school district affected.

185. That the local educational authority should be empowered to supplement from local rates the voluntary subscriptions given to the support of a public State-aided Elementary School in their district, to an amount equal to these subscriptions, but not exceeding ten shillings for each child in average attendance.

186. That if, in the impending reorganisation of the local government of the country, education were recognised as one of the most important branches of that government, and arrangements made for gradually connecting it, more or less, with the civil administration of each locality, much of the unhealthy competition between the two school systems would disappear and the expenditure caused by their rivalry would be reduced."[1]

[1] *Income* and Expenditure of Schools. Report, p. 222.

As might be foreseen, the advocates of the Board Schools have straightway risen up to bar the admission of Voluntary Schools to a share in the Education Rate. The exclusive enjoyment of their immense financial superiority is the main support of their hope to starve or to crush the Voluntary Schools. They, therefore, are already in the field, and the Birmingham League is petitioning Parliament in the same sense. This is no matter of surprise, for they have always openly declared their policy to be the supplanting of Voluntary Schools by universal School Boards.

But it could not have been so easily foreseen that the National Society, the Convocation, and the House of Laymen should so hastily lend their co-operation to their adversaries by refusing to share the local Education Rate, as recommended by the Report of the Commission in 1861, and of the Commission in 1888. But the time is not yet come for such a final decision. When the inevitable decentralisation has charged the County Councils with the detail of local education, men will see that what they now think to be danger is their only safety.

I have again and again endeavoured to obtain from opponents reasons or arguments against the principle of political justice here asserted. Hitherto I have failed to obtain more than such answers as follows:

1. We will first examine them; and then, secondly, state and weigh all that we can imagine in reply to the assertion we have made.

First, then, the answers we have heard are as follows: "Let sleeping dogs lie;" "Let well alone;"

"Don t break up the settlement of 1870, and the compromise which, out of grace and favour, was made with the Voluntary system;" "The reopening of the question will bring a storm, and a terrible rising against the Voluntary system." This is not reasoning. It is what Coleridge called the argument of the horse-pond: "If you obstruct us we will drown you;" or, as it has been lately called, "the bludgeon argument." This is mere terrorism. Moreover, it is not we who break up the so-called settlement of 1870; it is they who are agitating for universal School Boards. And terrorism is no answer to the plain and explicit charge that the present administration, and the Act of 1870 in so far as it admits of such administration, are both morally and politically unjust.

We have already said that all who pay the Education Rate should share in the benefit of the Rate; and that to offer a share in the Rate upon a condition known beforehand to be of impossible acceptance is a deliberate moral and political injustice. But to offer Board Schools to the great majority of the English people who desire Christian schools is a condition known beforehand to be of impossible acceptance. It was exclusion aforethought. To offer Protestant schools to Catholic Ireland, Episcopal schools to Presbyterian Scotland, and undenominational schools to denominational England, as a condition of sharing the public revenue, would be a deliberate injustice.

Somebody has indeed thought to dispose of this *nent by saying* that, by this reasoning, every rate- *nd every* taxpaper who bears the public burdens

would have a right to demand a grant in aid to maintain a private police, a private Irish administration, and a private army, and so on *ad infinitum*. I am not surprised that those who think such answers to be argument should think the reasons on the other side to be sophisms. The assertion that all who pay should share is based precisely upon the contradictory of this statement. We condemn all such sectarian enjoyment of the public money. We expressly assert that all such private application of the public revenues is unjust. We assert that the exclusive enjoyment of the Education Rate by the Board School system alone is a sectarian application of public money. The injustice of it consists precisely and expressly in this: that it is a violation of the whole policy of the commonwealth. Monopolies, privileges, exemptions, and inequalities have long since been abolished as unjust, odious, and intolerable. Church rates were abolished because they were a universal impost for the exclusive enjoyment of a section of the population. All who bear the public burdens have a right to share the public benefits. The police protects all, the army defends all, the Government manages, or mismanages, as the case may be, our public affairs in behalf of all. It is on this broad and undeniable law of public and political justice that we affirm the right of all who pay the Education Rate to share in its beneficial distribution. These are not arguments, but *lemures* and *larvæ*, mere ghosts of arguments.

We affirm, then, that the enjoyment of the Education *Rate by the* Board School system alone, to the exclusion

of all other school systems in the land, is a revival of sectarian legislation in an aggravated form. It has all the injustice of the old Church rates without their historical palliation. When the people of England were united in religion, the Church rate was time-honoured and just. When Dissent sprang up a plea of injustice began to arise, and yet all property was transmitted with this ancient liability; and even now it is a minority that is relieved of the Church rate, and it is a majority who have lost their inheritance. In the case of the Education Rate not one of these palliations is to be found. It is a new impost created yesterday; it burdens property hitherto exempt; it taxes the majority for the exclusive benefit of a minority, of recent creation, a small minority in proportion as one-half to the whole, and in a matter intimately touching duty and conscience.

This injustice is all the more flagrant because, in the belief of the great majority of the people of this country, education is essentially a duty both of natural and Christian religion. Parents are bound by the law of nature, which is the law of God, to educate their children; that is, to rear them in the knowledge of God and of His law. They are bound to teach them the laws and obligations of natural morality, and to train them up in the faithful practice of duty to God and man.

On this ground the great majority of the people refuse the Board School system. It is by statute *essentially secular*. The moral and religious teaching *mitted into it* is permissive and not obligatory. We

believe moral and religious teaching to be necessary in education, and that no instruction without it is education. We, therefore, even on the ground of natural religion, conscientiously refuse the Board School system. And yet it is offered to us, and we have to pay for it.

But the case is stronger than this. The education of a Christian people must be Christian, and that by teaching and training Christian children in the positive doctrines and laws of Christianity. But this is excluded by statute. All Christian doctrine is positive, and positive doctrine is denominational, and denominational doctrine is prohibited in Board Schools.

On this ground also the great majority of the people refuse the Board School system. Nonconformists, in times past, refused Church rates because the Established Church taught doctrines which they rejected. We reject the Board School system because it does not teach the doctrines which we conscientiously believe to be necessary to education and inseparable from it. Education without Christianity we believe to be impossible, and contrary to the obligations of Christian parents. To make them, therefore, pay for its support and propagation is unjust and a grievance of conscience, and to exclude them from an equal State aid in grants and rates is political injustice.

It is a strange and sad spectacle to see Nonconformists, who made the land ring the other day with their indignation against Church rates, come forward now, insisting upon the Education Rate for their own exclusive benefit in Board Schools, which we conscientiously reject.

Lastly, it will be said that the Board Schools are not secular schools. By obligation of law they are secular, but by permission and administration they have admitted the reading of the Bible; and some of them have also an extensive religious and moral programme of instruction.

I have rejoiced in the powerful action of the religious conscience of the people by which the reading of the Bible, and such programmes of religious teaching as the London School Board has sanctioned, have been introduced into Board Schools. The more the better. I am thankful to see this movement of a higher mind continually advancing. Some years ago I called the Board Schools secular; and so, in their legal aspect, they are: but in their voluntary action they may claim to be religious. I wish I could call them Christian. The British and Foreign Schools read the Bible in the doctrinal sense of the Bible; the Board Schools read the Bible in any and every sense except the doctrinal sense of the Bible. Some assure us that all doctrines may be taught, and are taught in them, only not in a catechism or denominational formulary. The Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments are not denominational. Certainly the Apostles' Creed is not denominational, and it came out in evidence before the Royal Commission that there is no law which would exclude the Apostles' Creed from the Board Schools. Nevertheless, the religion taught in Board Schools is not positive Christianity. Indefinite Chris-
*nity is not Christianity*; as indefinite mathematics
*t mathematics.*

Well, then, let us say the Board Schools are not merely secular schools; they are, in the sense of the objector, religious schools. If so, then the State is paying public money for religion. "No," says the objector, "the grants and the rates go for the secular instruction." "No," we answer, "they go for sites, buildings, teachers, management." There is not a brick, nor a book, nor a teacher, nor a Bible, nor a lesson in the four school hours, nor a lesson out of the four school hours, which is not paid for by public money. It is a flagrant obtaining of public money under false pretences. The grants and rates are for secular education, and a profuse religious instruction, almost but only not Christian, is given by the highly-paid teachers of the Board Schools. And yet in the same breath we are told that the Voluntary Schools cannot share the rates because the rates would go to religious teaching; and that by the refined and elevated illustration which has become classical, that "if you feed a man, you feed his leg." A Board School is fed body and soul, and all its limbs, by public money. A Voluntary School is not adequately compensated even for its secular four hours by Parliamentary grants. But of this hereafter in its place. It is enough for the present to say that, if the Board Schools claim to be religious schools, then Voluntary Schools cannot in justice be excluded from the rates because they are religious schools.

But all this is not reasoning; it is trifling. The whole contention is a transparent veil through which *the motive* is clearly seen to be animosity against the

Established Church; and a resolution to retain the exclusive enjoyment of the rates. Leaving this light matter, let us go on to examine what more can be alleged to justify the exclusion of the Voluntary Schools from an equal participation in the Education Rates—equal that is, not in the amount received, but in the moral and legal right of participation. The Royal Commission lays down that the Voluntary Schools ought to provide their chief maintenance by voluntary contributions. They would, therefore, receive a less amount from the local rates, willingly and contentedly. It would be for the protection of their freedom of conscience that they would willingly accept a smaller subsidy.

We will now go on to weigh what has the weight or semblance of serious argument.

The chief and most intelligible argument to justify the exclusion of Voluntary Schools from a share in the Education Rate is that the supreme Legislature has power to attach what conditions it sees fit to its grants of public money. Parliament is indeed supreme but not unlimited. *Id potest quod jure potest.* Power without right is injustice. The Legislature is as much bound by moral laws as each several man. Laws at variance with moral right are legal but not just. They are morally null and void. The most perilous state of a people is that in which the law is at variance with justice. *Summum jus summa injuria.* Such rights are moral wrongs, against which the conin man and the law of God are alike arrayed. rel the parents of a Christian people to send

their children to schools where no religion is taught, as in America, or where the Bible is only read without interpretation, or without its true interpretation, or still worse, with erroneous interpretation, and by interpreters untrained and incompetent to interpret, is a violation both of natural and political justice. It is an outrage on the natural rights of parents, and on the religious conscience of a Christian people. The Common School system in America is a case in point. If the school rate were given exclusively to the Established Church, Nonconformists would quickly see the injustice; or if to Catholics only, Protestants would go to the stake rather than subsidise the Woman of the Seven Hills. But as the rate is exclusively their own, it is in their judgment eternally just. The supreme Legislature has no power to make such a law: and the subject is not bound by it. If the Voluntary system had not already spread so widely in England, thereby providing a refuge from the legal compulsion, the Act of 1870 before now would have roused the people of this country to a religious conflict.

2. And here is an aggravation of this injustice. The Education Rate is raised by the precept of a minority of the English people, and applied to the schools of that minority, to the exclusion of the majority, who, nevertheless, are compelled to pay the rate.

3. The contributions of a population of mixed religion ought in justice to return in benefit not of a *part but of* the whole mixed population. But if the *religious* divisions be such that this is impossible, then

the State is bound in political justice to be neutral towards all religious divisions or denominations, and to distribute the public revenues and the public rates not upon the basis of religion in which the population is divided, but upon the basis of secular instruction upon which alone the population is united.

Laying down this broad and equal law, the school rate ought to be shared by all statutory Elementary Schools in so far as, and no farther than, they provide the secular instruction required by the State. But the Voluntary Schools provide amply, and, it may truly be said, equally, the secular instruction required by the State, and yet they are excluded from any share in the school rate, to which they are, nevertheless, compelled to pay.

But it is said that Parliament in the Act of 1870 has carefully followed this broad principle of neutrality as to religion, inasmuch as it gave no public money for religious teaching, but only and exclusively for the secular instruction. It is on this ground that we claim a share in the rates. The State gives no public money to Voluntary Schools for their religious teaching, but strictly and precisely for their secular instruction. In the eye of the law Voluntary Schools are as absolutely secular as Board Schools. The State takes no cognisances of anything but of the matter taught in the four school hours. It has excluded all teaching and all books of religion from those four hours: it forbids teachers to introduce religion in the four school hours: *elaborately directs* the inspectors as to the matters of *section, from* which not only is religion excluded,

but morality is reduced to punctuality, cleanliness, and order.

It is contrary to truth and to fact to say, as we have already affirmed, that the public money goes to the religious teaching. The Parliamentary grants do not cover at most more than half the cost of the Voluntary Schools. This does not pay for even the four hours of the secular teaching. The other half—that is, the school, the teachers, and all else that is taught—is paid for by voluntary contributions.

4. It may be said—for anything may be said—that Parliament may establish forms of education as it sees fit, and may levy a rate for its propagation and support. This also needs limitation. Parliament certainly cannot establish any one form of religious education in a people of mixed religion; nor can it strike a Winchester measure of compromises and fragmentary doctrines, and impose it upon a people intensely denominational. It is limited by political justice so to legislate for the people as to give perfect liberty of conscience to all. The atrocity of the Penal Laws was especially in this point. Nonconformists of this day ought to be among the foremost in condemning the exclusive enjoyment of the school rate and the inequalities flowing from it. And so I believe they would but for an animosity against the State Church, which they denounce as the golden calf set up in Dan. But why should they also set up another in Bethel? This conflict taints and obscures the whole discussion about education. Moreover, many of the leading Nonconformists have become *politicians*. They are working in line with men who

have imported among us the neutral, secular, and lay education which has wrecked France, and, if it could prevail, would wreck Christian England. The sons of the Pilgrim Fathers have founded the Common Schools of the United States which are effacing Christianity; and the sons of the Free Churches of England, who of old went to prison and to pillory for religion, are hindering the Christian freedom for which their fathers suffered.

5. But once more, it is affirmed that Parliament may justly establish a system of education which is merely secular. In so doing it would violate no man's conscience in religion. It would exclude all religion, and found itself upon that in which all men agree. Could not the State lawfully compel all its members to learn French, or fortification, or mathematics? Cannot the State impose military service on all men by universal conscription? Therefore, is not the State justified in obliging all children to pass through an elementary secular education, especially as it gives free choice as to the schools to which the children may be sent—that is, to the Voluntary Schools or the Board Schools? Some will ask, May not the State lawfully compel all children to attend a Common School system purely secular, and without regard to social inequalities, as in the United States? This is really to ask, Is there any limit to the power of the State over its members?

*Happily* for the civilised world, there are now but *men left who* deify the State. The atheistical *icians are trying* to sweep all recognition of God

and His law from the civil life of the commonwealth. But so far as they tell us, they would be content with the effacement of God; they do not require a public denial of His existence, nor the abolition of marriage, nor the legal admission of polygamy. But if these laws were proposed by them, would the State have power to enact them? Is it not absolutely certain that the supreme power of the State is limited by antecedent moral laws; and that its power is sovereign so long as it is subject to these higher laws? What, then, are these higher and controlling laws which limit even the supreme power of human legislation? In one word, they are the law of nature for all human society, and the Christian law for all Christian commonwealths.

The State has both power and right to impose military service by conscription on all its members, because it is founded in the right of self-defence, which by the law of nature is in every man, and in all human society. Whether, and when, and how far, and under what limitations universal military service shall be imposed is a question of need, of expediency, and of legislative wisdom. *Salus populi suprema lex.* The overthrow of the moral order, and the consequent supremacy of the material order in Europe at this day, render conscription inevitable. There are no armies now in Europe. There are armed nations instead. War is every man's trade. Self-defence is a flimsy pretext. It does not hide the ambitions, jealousies, and revenges which are seething below.

In England universal military service would be resisted by our democrats with all their fire, not only

as needless and ruinous to the domestic life of our people, but as an unjustifiable excess of legislation, which, if needless, is unjust, and, like a penal law, may compel men to suffer, but does not bind the conscience. It would be evaded by a ceaseless exodus over the Atlantic.

What, then, is the power of the State in the education of children? Nobody now denies that the State has a power even to compel the education of children. This was indeed denied and resisted in the years between 1840 and 1850, and it was this short-sighted denial and ill-fated resistance that passively looked on while a million of children were wandering schoolless—it was this desolation that brought down upon us the Act of 1870. The State then came in. And I fully recognise its right to do so, because its right is founded upon the natural right and duty of parents to educate their offspring. So long as they discharge this duty the State has no right to intervene. Parental rights, are in possession, and by the law of nature, which is the law of God, they are anterior to State rights, and are supreme. If parents neglect their duty they suspend, or even may abdicate, their rights. When a father or mother is guilty of infidelity, the custody of children remains with the innocent. The civil tribunal does not create the right of custody. It recognises and declares it under the protection of public law. Criminal and cruel parents in like manner forfeit their rights by violating their duty. The State

*comes in* *tis*—that is, not being parent, and

*not pre* latonic absurdity of claiming the

children as its own, in the place or stead of the parents, it uses the parents' right which had been abused, or not used, through criminal or culpable neglect. And further, this vicarious office the State assumes as custodian of the rights of the child. What the High Court of Justice does in protecting the heirlooms of its wards, the State does in protecting the education of children. They have rights of which they may not be defrauded. But the intervention of the State *in loco parentis* charges the State with the duty of doing what the parents were bound to do. The children, therefore, of Christian parents have a right to Christian education. If their parents culpably defraud them of it by neglect, the State is bound to recognise the right of the children and to redress the wrong done by the parents. The State cannot say, The parents may have been Christian, but I am only secular; they may have had Christian obligations, but I have only secular duties. But it will be said that the State in England is neutral in the midst of Christian sects or Christian controversies; that it cannot undertake to provide more than secular instruction.

This cannot be denied; and we must accept the inevitable. But for that reason the State is all the more bound by political justice to protect the liberty of conscience, and to afford the fullest facility to all to supplement fairly and at their own cost the religious education of Christian children.

Here, then, are three distinct limitations of the supposed unlimited liberty of the State in matters of education.

(1) It is limited by the rights of parents. It cannot intervene so long as they discharge their duty in educating their children. This is fully recognised at this moment. The law of compulsion is never applied to the educated classes.

(2) It is limited by the rights of children. This is carefully recognised and provided for under the Poor Law Acts, and the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Acts. These wise and equitable statutes lay the basis of a future legislation by which the two systems of education now in unequal and mischievous conflict may be brought under one larger and higher administration.

(3) It is limited by the duty so to provide for the instruction of the people in secular matters as not to interfere with the religious education of children. The age of education is from three to thirteen. Unless children are trained and taught in faith and morals, at home or in schools, during those ten years, the time for education is gone for ever. In this is seen the vital necessity of the religious education of Voluntary Schools; and I will say of the imperfect religious and moral teaching of Board Schools. The heartless talk about teaching and training children in religion by their parents, and at home, and in the evening when the children are wearied out with school and the parents are worn out by daily toil, or in one day in seven by Sunday-schools, deserves no serious reply. To sincere common sense it answers itself.

*6. If it be said* that the school rate is paid not only *parents who* have children, but by a multitude who

have no children, and that, therefore, the benefit of the rate is enjoyed by a class, and not by all, the answer is that the education of the people benefits the whole commonwealth. And, still more, there is in this no parallel. The Board School monopoly excludes the great majority of those who are educating the people. It favours one class of schools, and excludes all other classes of schools, though their statutory sufficiency and efficiency are recognised in the law of the land.

7. Once more, an attempt has been made to claim for the Board Schools a special precedence and privilege as the schools of the people; and, as such, to justify their claim to an exceptional and privileged treatment. To this pretension the answers are manifold. England is intensely denominational, and has already refused the Board Schools, both because they are secular and because they mutilate Christianity. The Christian schools of England contain a majority of children as two to one. They are therefore, even by this title alone, the schools of the people as against the schools of a minority favoured by Act of Parliament. They are also the schools springing from the voluntary effort of the people, maintained by popular contribution, and attended by free choice. The Board Schools are managed by Boards chosen indeed by ballot, in which not more than a third at most of the electors take the trouble to go to the poll. So little claim have they to be called the schools of the people. They are State schools, veiled by a triennial election *in which only* one elector in three cares to vote.

But this is no narrow question of schemes of education. It raises the whole question of our national character, and of our future as a people. It is not only the Voluntary Schools which have sprung from the conscience and free will of the people. The free will of the people which formed them and has perpetuated them has formed the national character and the British Empire. It was not the State nor the Legislature that laid the foundations of our greatness. It was the free will and energy of individuals, the enterprise and courage of men venturing on their own risk, that acquired a footing on shores which afterwards became colonies. It was not the State nor the Legislature that created our world-wide and boundless commerce. Voluntary freedom and energy has built up our industries at home and abroad. Commerce went first and empire followed. It has been truly said that "commerce without empire is as wings without a body," and again, that "trade follows the flag." Most true, but there was not even the first stone of empire, nor the first shred of the flag, until commerce had by its own freedom and courage led the way. Our whole commonwealth rests upon the free will and energy of the people, unaided in all that men can do for themselves, and aided only in such works as are for the common weal, and only in so far as they surpass the powers of voluntary effort. The State, then, measures out its aid with great thrift and reluctance, enabling men by its co-operation to do what they cannot do alone. The *defence of our shores*, and the domestic safety of life, *perty, and liberty* are beyond all individual effort.

Therefore the public law comes in to provide. The Royal Navy is a charge upon the public revenue; but the commercial navy is the work and property of private men. Our vast network of railroads is jealously retained in private ownership, and that because in efficiency and safety voluntary enterprise and intelligence can do what State control could never accomplish. But nobody disputes this law of our policy until the education of the people comes up. And yet it is in this that natural duties and natural rights of conscience and parental authority have an imperishable and sovereign claim. Nobody is bound by the law of nature to trade or to hold railway shares, but every father and mother is bound to educate their children. The free-will and conscience of parents have hitherto formed the national character, and the national character has formed our manifold greatness. It was not schools without Christianity, managed by Boards, that made the only England known to history, or the Empire that is in all the world. It was the education of the English people springing from itself and forming itself that has brought us to our present greatness. If the State had not lagged behind in its parsimony and its blindness to the vital welfare of the people; if if it had watchfully and adequately helped the development of the free self-education of the people, there could never have been the vision of millions of schoolless children growing up in vice and ignorance, as we were told in 1870. When, therefore, we speak of Voluntary Schools, or of the Voluntary system, we *are using* a conventional language, shallow and mis-

leading. The education of a people by its own free will, in conformity with conscience, and under the responsibility and control of parental rights, is a duty both of natural and of Christian law. Such was and is the national education of Christian England, in which Board Schools and School Boards have no root. The Act of 1870, therefore, is at variance with the conscience of England in three vital points. First, it is a breach in the tradition of Christian education. For the first time since England was Christian, an education without positive Christianity has been set up among us. The multiplying divisions of the last three hundred years have reduced the Legislature to the necessity of shaking itself loose from all forms of religion, and of confining itself to the secular instruction of the people. So far, then, as the public action of the State is engaged, the maintenance and perpetuity of Christian England has ceased. It is thrown on the private action of individuals, or on the efforts of sects and communions. It is no longer a public, but a private or domestic interest. And although no one who realises what religious education means can believe that the work of one day in seven, or of a couple of hours in that day, can perpetuate the Christianity of England, nevertheless I rejoice to know that while the number of children attending daily in Elementary Schools is 3,101,237, the number attending Sunday-schools is 3,173,000;[1] that is, 70,000 more. This number is below the mark, for the statistical return is *not complete.* These facts are a direct refutation of

[1] *Report, Reservation*, p. 300.

the notion that the people of England are indifferent about religious education. They prove that even the Board Schools have been constrained to teach religion by the conscience of Christian England. Here is the testimony of the minority of the Commission: "An enormous majority of the School Boards of England, and a *large majority* of the School Boards of Wales, have provided in their schools for daily prayers, for the singing of hymns, and for the undenominational instruction of the children in the Bible."[1] In this I rejoice.

The second consequence of the Act of 1870 is that henceforward there will be an ever-increasing division of the English people, of whom one part will be brought up in the definite faith of Christianity, and the other in an indefinite religion. There will be two Englands, the old and the new; and this divergence will declare itself more and more in every year; for that which is indefinite has no permanent hold upon the intellect, and inevitably becomes more vague, is forgotten, and passes away. "A house divided against itself falleth."

The third consequence is, that as all things are preserved and reproduced by the principle from which they spring, and as England was created in its unity and character by Christianity, we shall have cut the root from which England sprang. Already year by year the recognition of Christianity is being effaced from our laws, our legislation, our public and private life. Without God there can be no commonwealth among men. The fountain of unity, authority, and obedience

[1] *Report*, Reservation, p. 293.

is neither in man nor in society; both man and society depend on a will and a law which have civilised the Christian world. Nations that put off their Christianity forfeit their civilisation. Warmth will linger long in a body that is dead. The moral life of Christian morals will for awhile survive the loss of faith; but dissolution has set in.

John Stuart Mill says that the worst form of education is a State education. This judgment is all the more valuable in so advanced a Liberal or Radical authority. But in truth his was a consistent Liberalism. He saw that when the State controls the minds of a people, it leads to a control over their lives and persons. In his *Essay on Liberty* he says, "That the whole or any large part of the education of the people should be in State hands, I go as far as any one in deprecating. All that has been said of the importance of individuality of character, and diversity in opinions, and modes of conduct, involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of education. A general State education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another, and as the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the Government, whether this be a monarchy, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of the existing generation, in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body." [1]

*Again,* "*It* is of course not desirable that anything

[1] *Essay on Liberty*, c. v. pp. 62, 63, People's Edition, 1867.

should be done by funds derived from compulsory taxation which is already sufficiently well done by individual liberty." And further he adds, "One thing must be strenuously insisted on: that the Government must claim no monopoly for its education, either in the lower or in the higher branches, must exert neither authority nor influence to induce the people to resort to its teachers in preference to others, and must confer no peculiar advantages on those who have been instructed by them." . . . "It is not endurable that a Government should, either in law or in fact, have a complete control over the education of the people."[1] Such is the state of France. To this the aggressive Liberals of to-day would reduce England.

Mr. Mill belonged to the genuine Liberalism which protected and perfected human liberty in all its forms, personal and parental. He saw that the education of children is a vital right and supreme duty of parents; that it is a sacred responsibility of the domestic life of the people. He had no sympathy with the aggressive Liberalism of to-day, born of the revolutionary despotism of France.

I had the privilege of conversing with the late Mr. Forster, in his last illness, on the Act of 1870. I objected to it on the ground that it assumed the education of the people to be the right and office of the State. This he firmly denied; declaring that the Act of 1870 neither makes nor implies any such assumption. He quoted in proof the Act of 1876, which expressly declares that the education of children is the responsibility

[1] *Essay on Liberty*, c. viii. sec. 5, People's Edition.

and duty of parents. He said that the State may aid them to fulfil, and may compel them to discharge, that duty; but that, except as a penalty for neglect, the State cannot assume it to itself. The words of the Act of 1876 are as follows: "It shall be the duty of the parent of every child to cause such child to receive efficient elementary instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic; and if such parent fail to perform such duty, he shall be liable to such orders and penalties as are provided by this Act" (39 & 40 Vict. c. 79).

This I have here stated because I believe the refusal to admit the Voluntary Schools to share the Education Rate is justified by the Birmingham League, and by many of the friends of the Board School system, on the assumption that the education of the people is a duty and right of the State, as recognised in the law of England.

Some years ago the evidence of M. Jules Simon as to the disastrous effects of State education in France was given in print, and I will not repeat it now. But his book, *Dieu, Liberté et Patrie*, ought to be studied by every man who is responsible in the education of this country. The effects of the Common School system in the United States are so little known in England, and we are so carefully misled by the persistent eulogies of its admirers, that I think it well to give here the judgment of Americans of high repute. The Common School system is founded precisely on the *claim of the* State to educate the children of the

*Chancellor Kent* says: "In New England it has

been a steady and governing principle, from the very foundation of the colonies, that it was the right and duty of the Government to provide, by means of fair and just taxation, for the instruction of all the youth in the elements of learning."

Mr. Montgomery, the Assistant Attorney-General at Washington, quotes this passage, and adds: "That until a recent date this New England system was steadily resisted by other States," so that two systems, the New England or Public School system, and a system founded on the rights of parents, like our Voluntary system, existed for two hundred years side by side. He describes these two systems as the parental and the anti-parental systems. After the Civil War, the New England system was imposed on all the States; the anti-parental suppressed the parental schools.

He then goes on to say: "Keeping steadily in view . . . that a people *properly* educated are more moral, virtuous, contented, happy, and law-abiding than an ignorant people, let us suppose that we somehow find living side by side two communities, one of which is made up almost entirely of educated people, while the other is largely composed of illiterate people; and let us further suppose that amongst those considered educated you find that in proportion to their population they have six criminals where the more illiterate community has but one," nearly two paupers where the illiterate have but one, two insane to one, four suicides to one, three deaths from indulgence of *brutal* passions to two—"what conclusion would

you arrive at with reference to that kind of education?" [1]

He then takes a group of six New England States, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, for educated States; and for unlettered States the six States of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

The first six States had 2,665,945 native-born white inhabitants, of whom only 8543 could neither read nor write; the last six had 3,181,969, a larger population, of whom 262,802 adults could neither read nor write.

Now, these two groups started originally under conditions almost identical of race, language, laws, manners, and religion.

There was one point in which they differed. "More than two hundred years ago the principle was incorporated into the legislation of Massachusetts that *the whole people must* be educated to a certain degree *at the public expense*, irrespective of any social distinctions."

"In the six New England States the proportion of illiterate whites was only one to every 312, while Virginia and her five sisters counted one illiterate to every twelve." "How stand the criminal lists? Massachusetts and her five sisters, out of her native population of a little more than two and a half millions, had, *on June 1st, 1860*, just 2459 criminals in prison, while *ia and her* five comparatively unlettered com-

[1] *The School Question*, &c., pp. 9, 10.

panions, with a native white population of over three millions, had but 477 in prison "[1]—the New England six had one to every 1084; the other six one to every 6670. So, again, as to pauperism, there is one to every 178 against one to every 345. Suicides were as one in every 13,235, as against one in every 56,584; deaths from criminal passions, one in 84,737, as against one in 128,729; and insanity, one in every 800, as against one in 1682.

All this needs explanation, which has never been given. It is easy to foresee many cavils, but the substance of the impeachment cannot be refuted.

The conclusion is inevitable and peremptory. There is something wrong in the system of education. What that is we shall hereafter see.

The same system of education, with the same results, has been founded in California, which now outstrips Massachusetts in its proportion of criminals. This the newspapers of San Francisco are beginning to see. The Boston correspondent of the *Morning Call* says that "a large number of Public School men have come to the conclusion that the Public School system of that city is a failure."[2]

The *Alta California* calls the Public School system "our anaconda," and adds: "If we are to judge this system by its apparent fruits, we shall have to pronounce it not only a melancholy but a most disastrous failure, and that it will be idle to look for the cause of the general rowdyism, idleness, and viciousness of the rising

[1] *The School Question*, &c., p. 11. [2] Ibid. p. 18.

generation anywhere but in the training which it has been receiving."

On March 28th, 1874, the Californian Legislature enacted: "That every parent, guardian, or other person . . . having charge or control of any child or children between the ages of eight and fourteen years shall be required to send such child or children to a public school," unless such child or children are excused from such attendance by the Board of Education of the city.[1] "The parents must show *to the satisfaction* of the Board that the bodily or mental condition of the child renders it unable to attend. The parents are thus stripped of the guardianship of their children, and are dependent on an irresponsible Board of school trustees."

Since 1850 the State of New York has increased its expense for schooling by more than three hundred per cent, and the increase of crime is over five hundred per cent.

In the last thirty years the school expenditure in Illinois has increased fourfold, and the ratio of crime in the white population has also quadrupled.

In order to prevent crime, Massachusetts in 1647 gave the educational control to the public, and after over two hundred years' trial—to wit, in 1860—had a native white criminal to every 649 people. Virginia, down to 1860, had always left the educational control of children to their fathers and mothers, and the result was one *criminal to* every 6566 inhabitants.

*Mr. Montgomery* gives in full the Official Statistical

[1] *The School Question*, &c., p. 19.

Tables on which his statements are based, and says: "In the face of these startling statistics, is it not high time for those who claim that the present Public School system tends to diminish crime to point out at least one State, or one fraction of a State, where the system has not produced exactly the opposite result?"

And once more, to guard himself against the imputation of saying that "education leads to crime," he says again it is a "*false system* of education" [1] against which this charge is brought.

This transfer of parental authority to the public has inevitably produced a subjection of parents to the school-teachers. By the law of nature and of revelation parents are charged with the duty, and have also the right, to nurture and train their own offspring, to rear and educate them, to choose the teachers, companions, schools, and kind of education their children shall receive. This is violated and subverted at one blow in the Public School system.

By the 654th section of the Penal Code of California, any parent is guilty of a misdemeanour "who upbraids a teacher of any public school in the hearing of a pupil." A most just provision, if the upbraiding be petulant or needless. But what if it be for patent and evident immorality? It may be imprudent, but certainly not penal.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in his Biennial Report for 1864, quotes the judicial decisions of some of the Eastern States, and maintains that "*the child should* be taught to consider his instruc-

[1] *The School Question*, &c., p. 102.

*tor in many respects superior to the parent in point of authority,*" and *that the vulgar impression that the parents have a legal right to dictate to teachers* " is entirely erroneous, and, further, *that parents have no remedy as against the teacher.*" "If his conduct is approved by his employers (the Public Board), the parents have no remedy against him or them."

I must add that if the parents of the United States submit even to the enunciation of such pedantic enormities, they are the most submissive of free people. In England such intolerable language would light a flame in every home.

Now it is precisely for this, among other reasons, that I desire to see the work of education decentralised, and thereby thrown off from the State and thrown upon the local responsibility of parents and of the people. It is esentially a popular and local duty. Surely the local rates ought to be charged with the rearing of children in innocence and a good moral life, before they are charged for police to arrest them, or for judges to punish them. The efficient education of children is the first and chief need of every locality, and it returns upon all its homes as one of the most precious local and public benefits. An Education Rate would soon diminish the rates spent on police and punishment. Already the Industrial Schools have diminished the crimes of the young, and so far the cost of their punishment is saved. The bringing home of education to each locality would most powerfully awaken parental *responsibility,* and so far restore the domestic life of *ilies. It would* render impossible in England what

we see in America. The false relation and inverted authority of parents and teachers among us could never arise. We should then see that the Voluntary Schools are in the fullest sense the schools of parents and of the people, and therefore in the truest sense the national education of England.

As yet this subject has never been fairly and fully laid before the country. No general election has tested the public conscience in this matter. I have a strong confidence in two things: the one, that the people will never give up their right to educate their own children according to their liberty of conscience; the other, that the law of "live and let live" is so deeply rooted in the people of this country that they will freely and fully respect the conscience of others while they claim to protect their own. It is the aggressive Liberalism and the interested ambition of Board School partisans that refuse to throw open to all their just share in the Education Rate. Our chief social, and, in the end, political, danger is the wreck of domestic life among our people. Houses unfit for human habitation, and the deadly havoc of the drink trade, have destroyed both parental authority and filial obedience, and therefore the life of home. The localising of school-work, not by School Boards with exclusive control of Education Rates, as now existing, but by a larger and equitable administration common to all statutory Elementary Schools, would be the most powerful influence in restoring the sense of responsibility in parents, and of obedience in children.

For these and other reasons, I cannot believe that

the people of England, when fully informed, would refuse the extension of the Education Rate. Already it is paid over an area covered, as we are told, by 17,000,000 of the population. How has it been accepted by 17,000,000, if the remaining 9,000,000 would rise against it? Let nobody be beguiled into thinking that the 17,000,000 represent the sway of Board Schools. In that vast population, the Voluntary Schools compared to the Board Schools are as two or three to one. In the remaining 9,000,000, no doubt the Voluntary School population would rise against an Education Rate levied for the exclusive benefit of Board Schools; but let a new and common law be passed, on the just and equal principle that all who pay should share, and I have yet to see reason to believe that the people of this country would rise against it. They would indeed rise against the unequal and unjust monopoly of School Boards. This injustice has already roused opposition, and the opposition is quoted as a reason for perpetuating, and even extending, the injustice.

But it may be said that the Established Church, in its Convocation and in the National Society, has refused the Education Rate. Wait a year until two events have come: the one, that the Report of the Royal Commission has been read and laid to heart; the other, that the County Councils are in activity, and the work of decentralisation is accomplished. I believe then there will come a turn in the tide like the rivers in the *South. There* will be no saying Peace, *Peace*, any *longer. The* future of the Voluntary system will be at

stake, and nothing but the protection of an equal and comprehensive law, common to all, will insure its perpetuity. County Councils of education, uniting in one common administration all statutory Elementary Schools, may take up into their own hands the two systems that are now unhappily in conflict. We shall then at last have justice, and a national system of education worthy of the name. Then the inextinguishable religious divisions of our country may find perfect liberty of action, and a reconciliation in mutual respect. Although I am no prophet, I will yet foretell that if the piecemeal and piebald system, which is no system, shall be suffered to drag on, no such happy result can ever be. Mutual mistrust and petty obstruction will be perpetuated, to the hindrance of education and the wasting distraction of our peace.

The Royal Commission openly declares that our present education system is imperfect, and demands further legislation. In its 181st Recommendation it says: "That the time is come when, for the best interests of education, some more comprehensive system of administration should be found—first, to remove, as far as possible, the grave and inequitable inequalities of the two systems of Voluntary and Board Schools, as now existing; and secondly, to eliminate as far as possible, for the future, the friction and collision which have so often and so injuriously arisen between them."

It is a mere illusion to say that the Act of 1870 was a *final* settlement. There is not in that Act a *single token* of finality, and if there were it would only

convict its authors of inexperience as legislators. There is no more finality in education than in Parliamentary Reform. The necessity of decentralisation, the growing powers of local government, the development of the people demanding a development of instruction, the requirements of new industries, the increasing needs of technical knowledge and skill—all these and many more social growths and changes make further and larger legislation inevitable. The three most experienced men by whose hands the Education Department has been hitherto administered—Lord Lingen, Sir Francis Sandford, and Mr. Cumin, the three chief experts in education—all alike see the need of further legislation, and in the main are fully agreed. These all agree in the policy of decentralisation and localisation, and of placing all statutory Elementary Schools on the same level of legal equality as to aid from both grants and rates. Indeed, there are only, so far as I have found, two classes who oppose the admission of Voluntary Schools to a share in the rates: first, those who would be glad to share in rates if they were not afraid of the ratepayers; and secondly, those who, having the exclusive enjoyment of the rates, are resolved to keep them for themselves alone. Fear and self-interest are the two motives; arguments they are not.

It is not the friends of the Voluntary system that are reopening the supposed settlement of 1870. The Birmingham League and all who are associated with *the movement* and outcry for universal Board Schools *have long ago* reopened the question. We are not

afraid of meeting this new trial of reason, justice, and strength. We appeal to the intelligence and the conscience of Christian England, of the England which has built up our world-wide Empire on the broad foundations of natural and political justice. This is our claim; and we will abide by the sentence of no party or section, political or religious, but by the conscience and voice of our country. To this we appeal. The welfare of the people—of our toiling millions, both now and hereafter—is at stake. Let them know, and let them speak for themselves. When the political questions which distract men's minds shall have been laid, let an appeal to the country be made on this question, which is more vital than all politics. It is in the behalf of the homes of our land that we appeal now from the leagues and parties and sections of theorists and politicians, in arrest of all premature and therefore prejudiced action, to the justice and the common-sense of the English people.

# RESERVATION.

I HAVE willingly signed the Report of the Royal Commission on Elementary Education, because in the main I agree in its conclusions and recommendations; but it has not treated of the one subject which I believe to be chief in importance, and of the most vital influence in the education of the people of England and Wales.

When the Commission opened its sessions, and during the whole course of the evidence, it seemed inevitable that the inconvenience and anomaly of the two existing systems, the Voluntary and the School Board systems, should become manifest; and that some higher and more comprehensive administration which should combine them both, and place them upon a just and equal level, would be recommended by the Commission to the Legislature. It cannot be believed that in the year 1870 it was intended to place the Voluntary system in a position of such unjust inequality in relation to the new system of School Boards. By the interpretation of the Act of 1870 a practically *unlimited* multiplication, paid for out of the school rates,

has been given to the Board School system. From the Voluntary system the power of multiplication has been practically taken away, not only by the refusal of State aid in building, but by the frequent refusal to recognise schools founded by unaided Voluntary effort. Again, the Voluntary system is aided from one source only of public revenue. The Board School system is aided from two. It receives Government grants on terms of perfect equality with the Voluntary Schools, and it has the absolute control of the Education Rates, from which the Voluntary Schools are as absolutely excluded. This unequal treatment of the two systems has also caused for the last seventeen years a most unequal competition, in which, in every branch of expenditure, the Board Schools are able to outstrip the heavily-weighted system of Voluntary Schools. Nevertheless, in the comparative efficiency of the two classes of Schools in respect to the three elementary subjects, which are the substance of all education, the Board Schools exceed certain Voluntary Schools by one or two per cent, or by only decimal points, and, after all, are not the highest in comparative success. It has hitherto appeared very improbable that the Commission should close its Report without pointing out these unjust inequalities, and suggesting, at least in outline, some *future legislative* remedy.

*The most* sanguine friends of the Voluntary system

cannot believe that it will ever recover the whole population of England and Wales; neither can the most devoted advocates of the Board School system believe that it can ever extinguish the Voluntary system, which is the shelter of the religious liberty of the people and of the rights of conscience in parents, and gives freedom to the inextinguishable religious denominations of our country.

We stand, therefore, at a point at which we are compelled to choose one of two courses—either to perpetuate our present fragmentary educational legislation, which hitherto has grown up piecemeal, involving the gravest inequalities in the measures of State aid, burdening thereby the supporters of the Voluntary system with the maintenance of their own Christian schools and with the payment of rates for a system which they conscientiously reject, or of framing some higher, more comprehensive, and more equitable law, by which these unjust inequalities shall be redressed.

Some new and larger statute for national education, equal and common to all, ought to restore the liberty of multiplication to the Voluntary system, and to eliminate the contentions which now exist, to the serious injury of our schools.

It might have been reasonably hoped that the Report of the Commission would have contained not only minute and careful recommendations in alleviation of school